■ ENTERTAINMENT / A3-1

Inside red carpet lifestyle of show biz celebs in new sub-section, Stars Living

■ BUSINESS / B1

4-month OFW remittances up 10.8% to $3.7B

■ METRO / A25

Wayward truck hits jeepney full of school kids; 3 dead, 12 hurt

■ SPORTS / A34

Germany secures 2nd round slot; Spain shows fiery form

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, June 16, 2006 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 188 P18 website: www.inq7.net

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By Gil C. Cabacungan and Margaux C. Ortiz

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By Armand N. Nocum

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Shut up, pro-GMA allies slam Biazon

By Philip C. Tubeza, Christine O. Avendaño and Juliet Labog-Javellana

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Biazon, chair of the committee, was accused of being publicity hungry.

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"The good senator is clearly reviving an issue that the public is tired of and wants to leave behind," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

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SHUT UP/ A23

AFP

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By Fe B. Zamora

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The widows of the two ex-CPP and NPA leaders—Gloria A. Jopson-Kintanar and Veronica Tabara—declined to be interviewed by the INQUIRER.

But both women, in their affidavits filed with the Department of Justice, accused Sison of the murders of their husbands.

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The arresting team did not know it was storming a house full of Estrada supporters, said the insiders who agreed to divulge the information on condition of anonymity.

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They were kept from their families for three days, during which time, they said, they were subjected to physical and mental torture.

Dionisio, 60, who appeared to have received the brunt of the torture, said he was being forced to admit he was a communist hit man sent to kill President Macapagal-Arroyo and certain Cabinet officials.

The insiders confirmed earlier statements of AFP officials that the real target of the raid was Dionisio, a barangay councilor suspected of being an important member of a Metro-Manila-based Special Operations Group of the CPP's armed wing, the New People's Army.

The military had expressed the belief that Dionisio was using the alias "Mike Gamara" and that he was also secretary general of the

RAID/ A10

Jolo's floral park a haven for war-weary folk

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

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Fitness buffs jog and lovers date in the area. Before, they could do that only at the wharf and airport of Jolo. But as the decades-old Moro insurgency appears to be winding down, there's a new liberating feeling in the air.

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"I was afraid. I felt that my life was always in danger whenever I left the house," Bonita, a staff member of the Department of Education's Alternative Learning System (ALS).

That was before Bonita learned about the park.

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Defense drift: 'Nicole' wanted more sex

By Volt Contreras and Tarra V. Quismundo

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In turn, Parmer relayed it to the US Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) in an interview five days later.

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Defense lawyers read out and highlighted these statements during their cross-examination of Brian Curley, the eighth prosecution witness and third NCIS agent to take the stand.

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The NCIS conducted interviews with the suspects and several witnesses. Four of its agents have been subpoenaed by Judge Benjamin Pozon of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 139.

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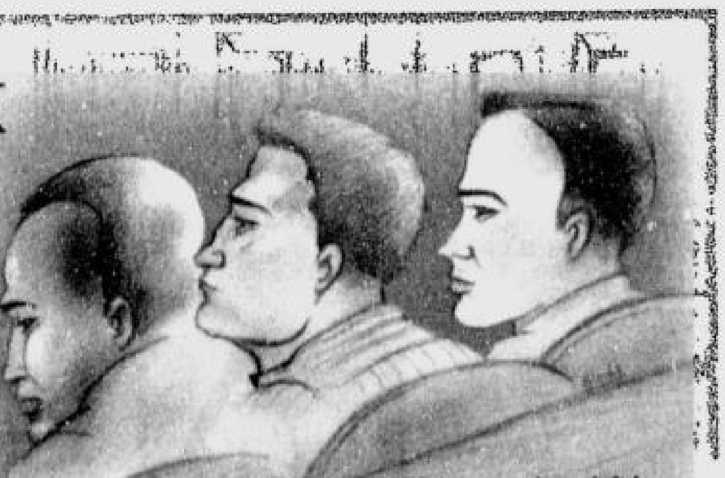

THE ACCUSED in court, from left Lance Corporal Dominic Duplantis, Keith Silkwood and Daniel Smith. (Not shown is Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier.) STEPH BRAVO

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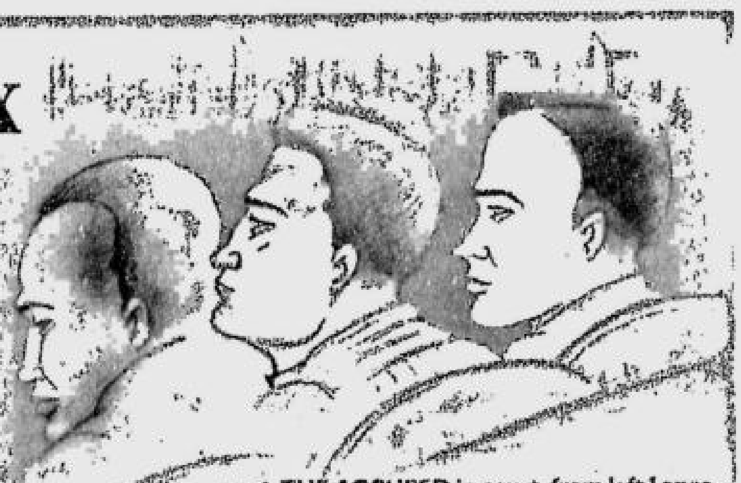

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western sections of Luzon and the whole of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY KATE V PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/06/15/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Power spot market to be launched

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO announced yesterday the start of the country's so-called "stock exchange for electricity" designed to spur competition among power suppliers and drive down the price of electricity for consumers.

The wholesale electricity spot market (WESM), which will start on June 23, will allow electric cooperatives and power distributors like Manila Electric Co. to choose from a wider array of energy suppliers.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the WESM would initially cover power distributors and suppliers in Luzon, specifically the Meralco franchise area, the country's biggest.

The WESM will make the market more transparent by allowing customers to "see what the current prices [are] which should lead to more competition and more reasonable rates of electricity," Lotilla said.

He said Luzon has an excess capacity of 4,000 megawatts, based on a dependable capacity of 10,500 MW and peak demand of 6,500 MW. This means there will be more sellers than buyers, this would lead to lower prices of electricity, he said.

Lotilla said that with Meralco allowing its industrial customers with a minimum demand of one megawatt to choose their own suppliers, factories will be able to cut costs and this in turn would spur interest among foreign investors to locate their plants in the country.

The infrastructure and guidelines for the operation of the WESM have been set, and operational issues that delayed its implementation have been resolved, he said.

For example, Lotilla said a tripartite committee made up of the Energy Regulatory Commission, the Philippine Energy Market Corp. and the Department of Energy has been tasked to set a price cap to keep trading volatility in check.

Lotilla said the WESM would encourage more power suppliers to come in because they would be able to start selling even without a contract.

Stop blaming opposition for blasts – solons

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Luige A. del Puerto

SEN. RODOLFO BIAZON AND Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday urged police authorities to stop accusing the political opposition for the series of bombings in metropolitan Manila and go after the culprits.

"Prove it," said Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security, after National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales and police officials blamed "destabilization forces" for three blasts in the capital the past few days that caused no injuries.

"I think Malacañang has a tendency to blame the political opposition for everything and anything that they cannot solve. I hope they can catch those people, whether from the opposition or not, and bring them to justice," Biazon said in a phone interview.

"I do not know of anyone in the political opposition who would do that. So they should prove it," Biazon said.

Pimentel told authorities to go after the "real bombers" and warned them against making false accusations against the opposition.

Opposition not involved

"Bombings of places, including Camp Bagong Diwa, are not the work of the legitimate opposition," Pimentel said.

The Philippine National Police, the National Bureau of Investigation, the military and Gonzales should identify, arrest and prosecute the culprits according to law, Pimentel said.

He said the opposition "completely dissociates itself from the bombings and other violent activities and reasserts its adherence to peaceful, constitutional means of changing the leadership of the nation."

He said it was illogical for the opposition to conduct the bombings because this would only alienate them from the people and prompt the government to "step up its repressive policies against its critics."

Senseless ploy

Pimentel said that instead of engaging in their "counterproductive and senseless ploy" of accusing the opposition, law enforcers should get their act together to track down the real perpetrators of the bombings.

Gonzales yesterday backtracked on his previous statement.

"I never said that the political opposition was behind the bombings. When I said opposition, it's a general term for all those fighting against the government. I am calling them opposition but I'm not referring to the political personalities from the opposition," Gonzales told reporters.

Gonzales also disputed the opposition counterclaim that the bomb attacks were actually the handiwork of the administration in a bid to paint a scenario of unrest to justify the declaration of another state of emergency.

"Who in his right mind will believe that? No rational thinking person will say that the government will harm itself," said Gonzales, who refused to comment on reports that he had recommended to the President the declaration of a state of national emergency.

Culprits identified

He claimed that the police had already identified the individuals who carried out the attacks. "But I don't want to give any clues at this time because it might affect the operation. We'll arrest first these people who are the center of the manhunt operation," Gonzales said.

Director Marcelo Ele Jr., head of the police inquiry, said the names of three to five people had cropped up in the investigation but he declined to give details. Ele said police had yet to determine whether these people had a hand in the bomb attacks.

"We do know as of now," Ele said. But he said that the release of an artist's sketch of a man who was reportedly seen near the scene of the explosion in Camp Bagong Diwa was an important lead. The camp in Taguig is the headquarters of the National Capital Region Police Office.

Ele reported little progress in unmasking "Taong Bayan at Kawal" or "Tabak," the little-known group that had claimed responsibility for the attacks.

FATHER'S DAY
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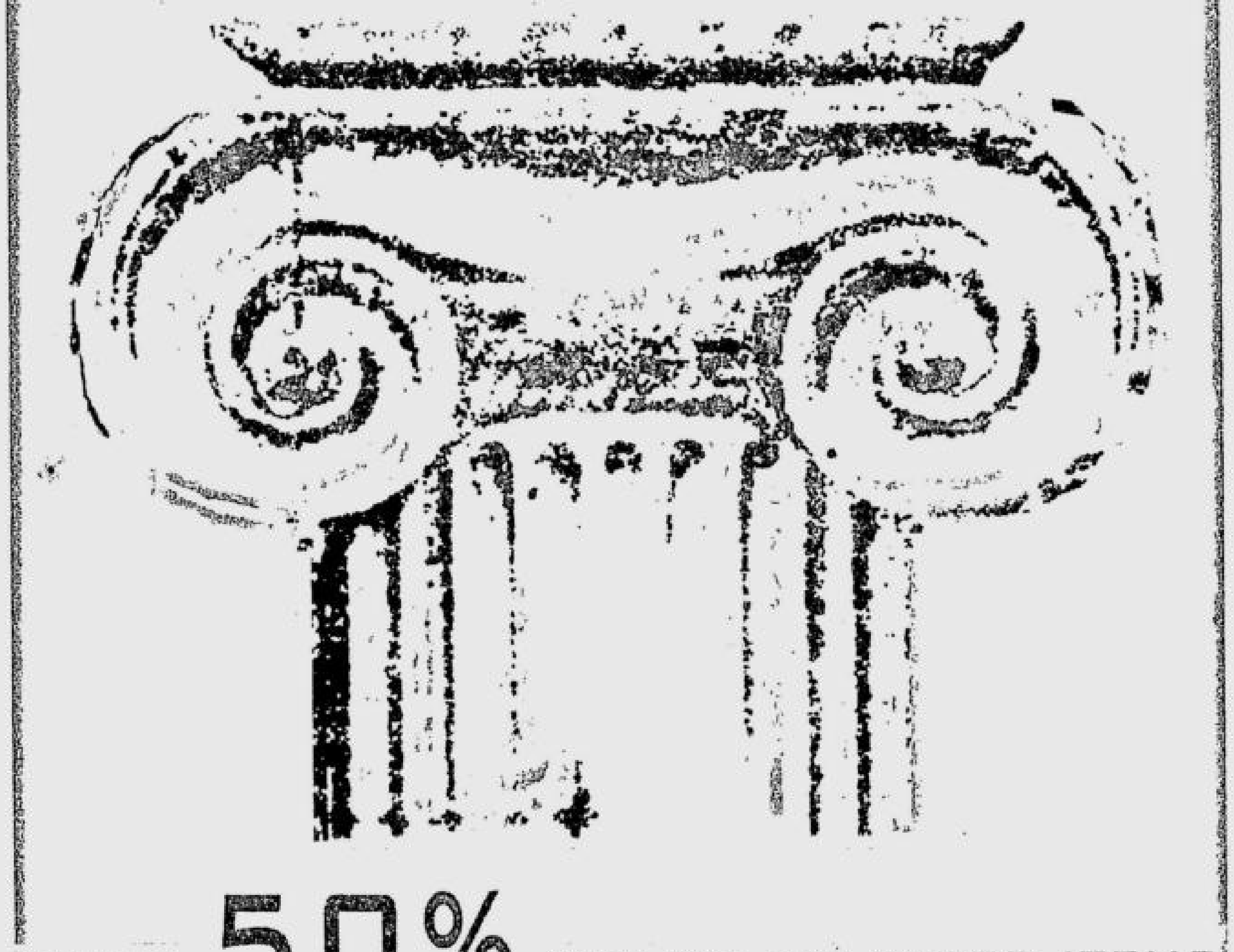

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Japan urged to rethink aid in light of killings

By Blanche S. Rivera

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS have urged Japan, the Philippines' biggest lender, to review its development aid program to Manila as they called attention to the increasing number of environmental activists killed in the provinces.

Friends of the Earth (FoE)-Japan, the US-based International Rivers Network (IRN), the Korean Asian NGO Center and the Yon Ghe Community University of Taiwan also called on the Philippine government to stop the harassment of environmentalists opposing mining, logging and other forms of natural resources exploitation.

"We, from the international community of nongovernment organizations, are very concerned about the alarming rise of human rights violations and the spate of killings of political activists, media people and, lately, of environmental workers in the Philippines," IRN campaign director Aviva Imhof said in a press conference in Quezon City yesterday.

Militant environmentalist group Kalikasan claims that 15 people have been killed while two others have been abducted or assaulted under the Arroyo administration because of their environmental advocacy.

The death of some of the victims named by Kalikasan, however, were also classified by other groups as political killings.

FoE-Japan campaigner Hozue Hatae said the Japanese government was "aware of and very concerned" about the killings in the Philippines, especially after the death of Jose Doton, whose local organization Timmawa closely worked with Japanese NGOs in assailing the San Roque Multipurpose Dam Project.

"We are now raising the issue of human rights to the responsible Japanese government agencies and institutions as basis for reviewing their support and funding to identified mega dam, energy and mining projects," Hatae said.

The Philippines has secured some 21.2 billion yen or about P10.1 billion from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation through Official Development Assistance for the Bohol Irrigation Project and Northern Negros Geothermal Power Plant Project.

Sequestration of Kokoy's Benguet shares upheld

THE SANDIGANBAYAN ANTI-graft court has upheld the government's sequestration of the Benguet Corp. shares allegedly owned by Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez, a younger brother of Imelda Marcos, the widow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government's writ of sequestration issued on Oct. 27, 1986, against the disputed shares was "proper and valid," said the resolution issued on Wednesday by the Sandiganbayan's Fifth Division.

The court was persuaded that the PCGG had the documents proving that Kokoy Romualdez, the principal defendant in the sequestration case, was the "beneficial owner" of the Benguet Corp. shares.

The 6,737,339 Benguet Corp. shares were registered in the names of Palm Avenue Realty and Development Corp. and Palm Avenue Holdings Co. Inc.

The court rejected the firms' appeal against its Feb. 4, 2003, ruling denying their motion asking the court to nullify the sequestration order.

The two firms challenged the validity of the sequestration order, claiming they had not been included in the sequestration suit and that Ramon Diaz, who signed the sequestration order, was not shown to be a commissioner of the PCGG at the time.

But the court said there was no doubt about Diaz's authority to sign the writ as his designation as PCGG commissioner had the portfolio level of deputy minister in 1986.

It also said that there was no mandatory requirement in the law that corporations or business enterprises alleged to be repositories of ill-gotten wealth have to be included in a suit for forfeiture and recovery.

The decision penned by the division's chair, Associate Justice Ma. Cristina Cortez-Estrada, was concurred in by Associate Justices Roland Jurado and Teresita V. Diaz-Baldos. *Nelson F. Flores*

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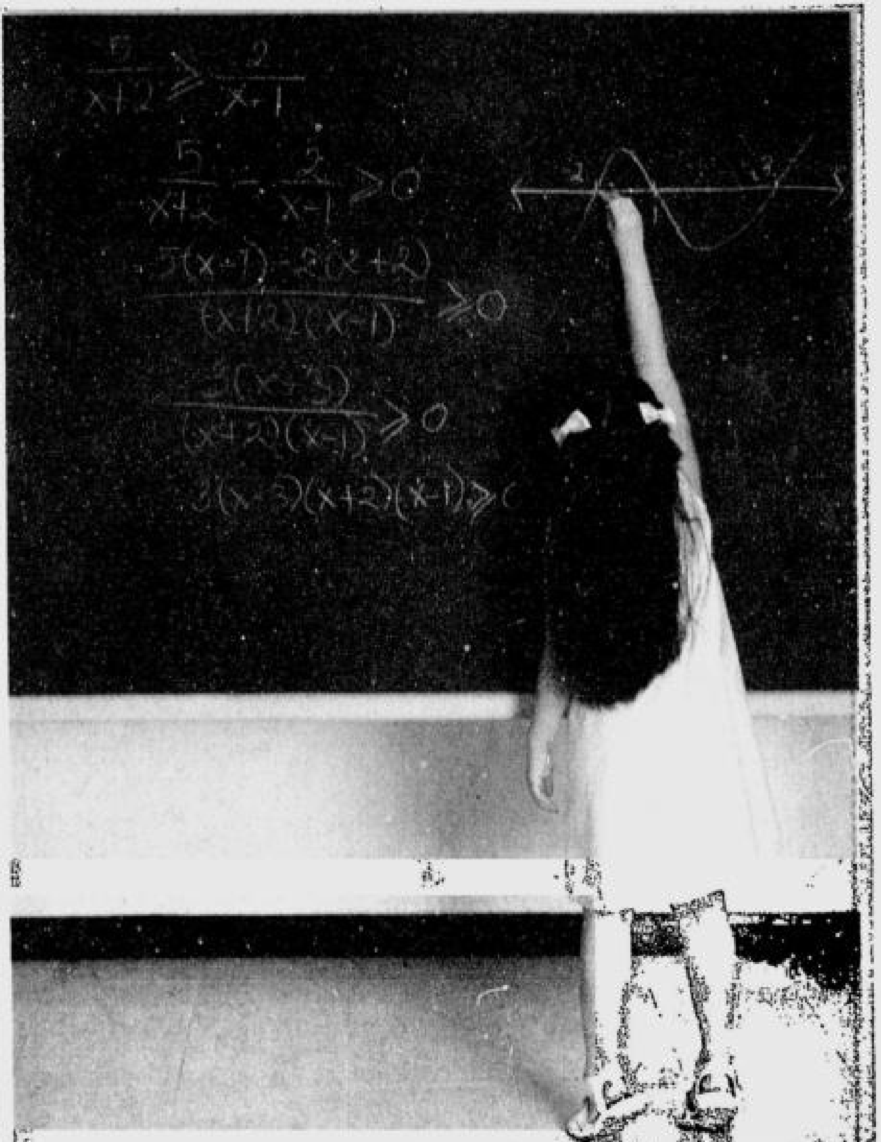
Now on its 10th year in the Philippines, Kumon's Math and Reading programs are helping more and more children learn skills vital to overcoming the challenges of life.



10 years

Kumon Philippines:
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FVR calls on Europeans to invest more in RP

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER PRESIDENT Fidel V. Ramos yesterday urged European businessmen to invest more in the Philippines as world trade is gravitating toward Asia.

Speaking at a business conference organized by his Ramos Peace and Development Foundation (RPDEV) and the Boao Forum for Asia in Makati City, Ramos said Asia's economic vigor was redrawing the geography of global trade, with China emerging as a manufacturing giant and India as a hub of information technology.

Along with emerging economies like the Philippines, he said, Asia is radically changing the relative prices of labor, capital, goods and assets throughout the world economy.

He said the Philippines, for example, offers many opportunities for the discerning investors, particularly in mining, energy, communications, chemicals and pharmaceuticals.

Business center

In recent times, he said, the Philippines has also become a center of business processes outsourcing mainly because of Filipinos' literacy in English.

Ramos said that while American and Japanese firms dominate Philippine outsourcing at present, he said the Europeans would do well to follow suit.

According to Ramos, European Union-member states have been the country's largest source of foreign direct investment, thus making the Philippines their base of operations would mean access to a market of more than 85 million Filipinos and some 550 million people in Southeast Asia through the Asean Free Trade Area (AFTA) mechanism and the Asean 10 plus China market of some 1.8 billion people.

He assured prospective investors their businesses in the Philippines would yield positive results considering the government's resolve to provide a good business climate.

"For Europe is where humankind's future is being shaped—where we may expect reason and humanity to develop more rapidly than anywhere else," Ramos said.

As such, he said, he expects EU and Philippine relations to be more of a caring, sharing and daring partnership for each other rather than a contest between developed and developing nations.

Synergy

Ramos also noted that a new world order was being born in Europe, with states giving up portions of their national sovereignty in favor of a higher "civilizational synergy."

He said European stability no longer rested on the balance of power but on the rejection of force and on "self-enforced rules of behavior."

"Gradually, painfully, the whole of the global community is moving away from the perpetuation of rule by sheer power toward communities of consent," Ramos said.

"This is likely to be a slow evolutionary process. It will suffer unavoidably the occasional setback but I have no doubt that it will be in Europe that we will first see the flowering of a full-blown community of consent, of the type that men and women of goodwill have hungered for since the beginning of mankind on our planet," he said.

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AUCTION DATE: JUNE 18, 2006 (SUN) @ 10:30 AM
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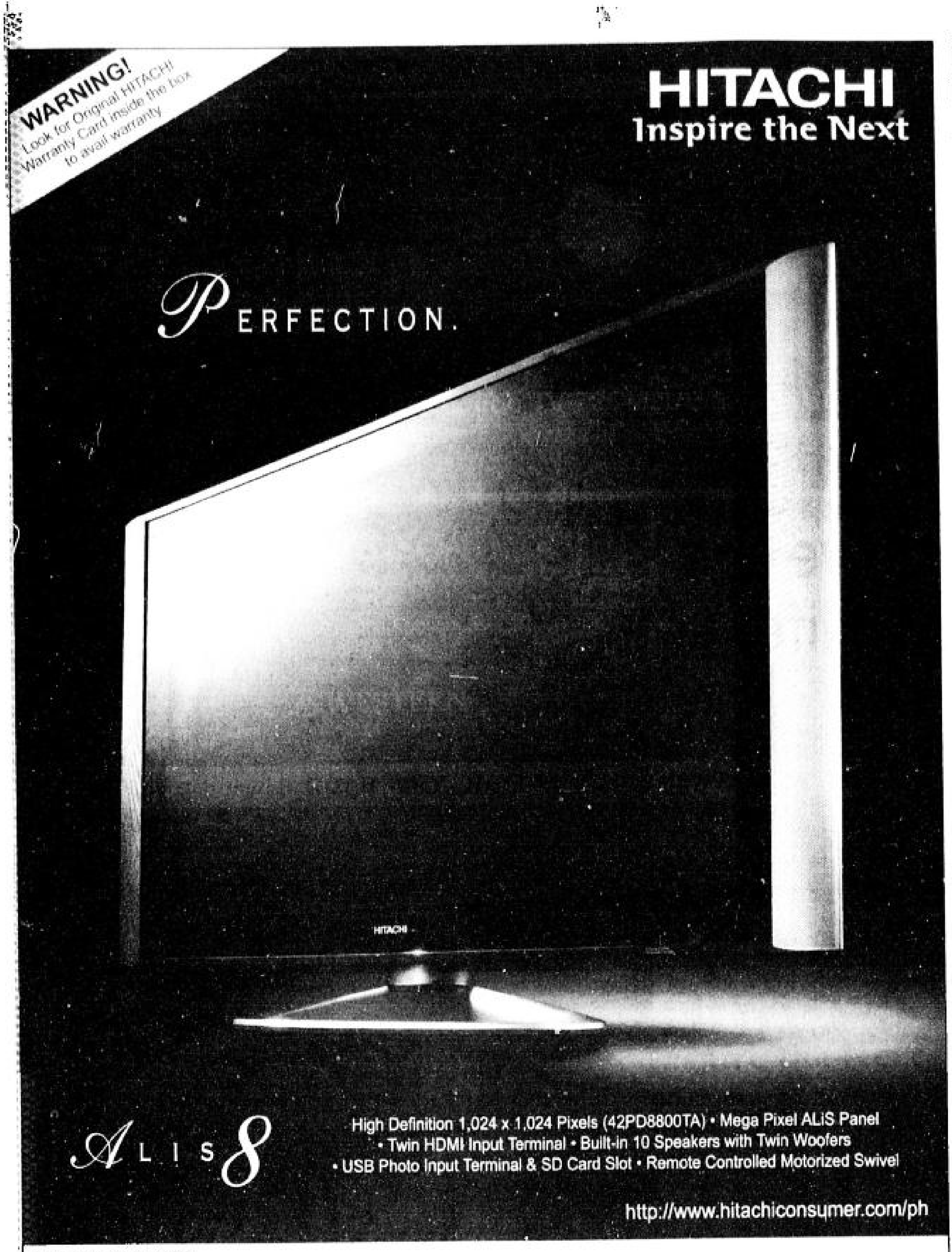

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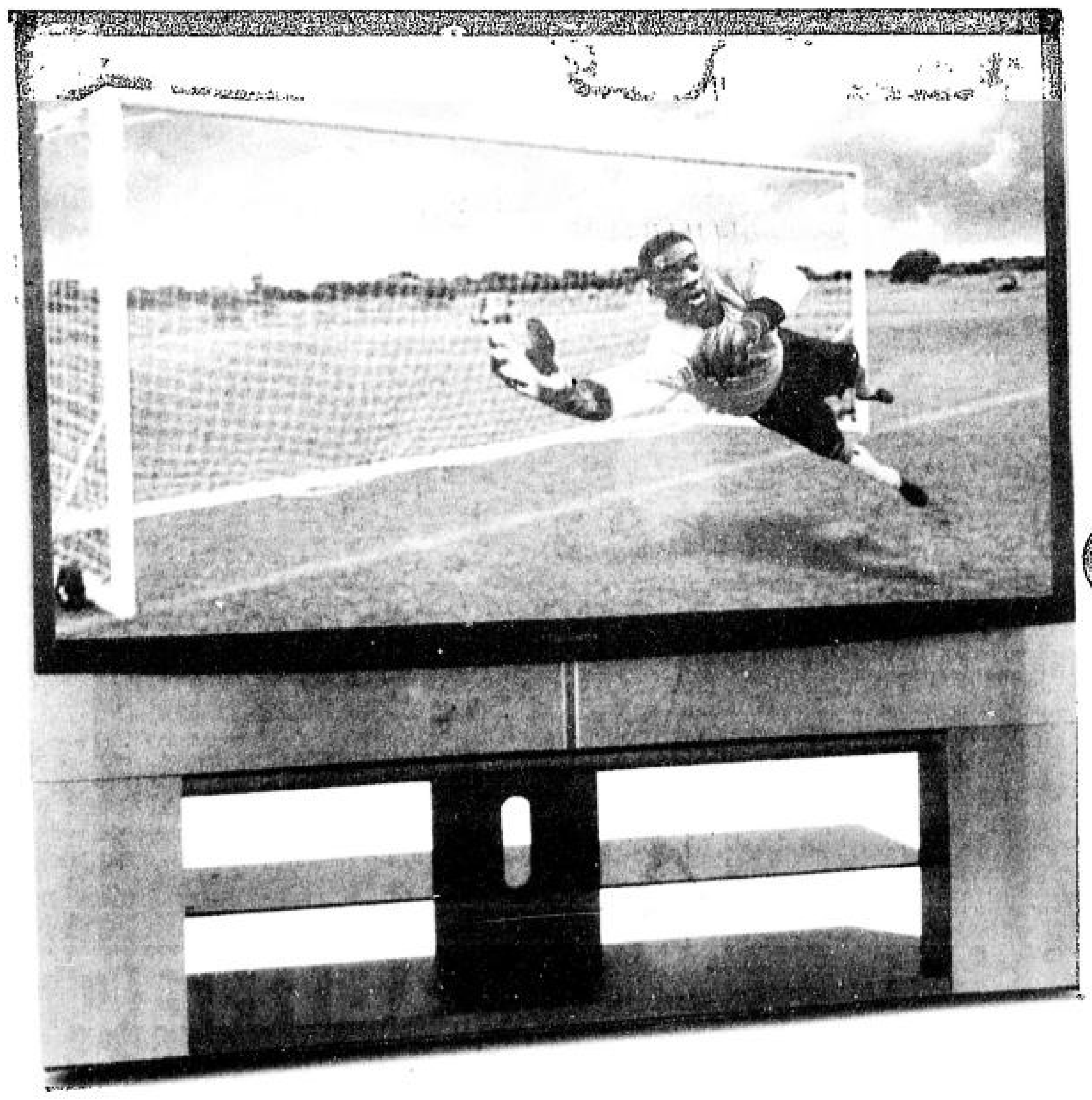

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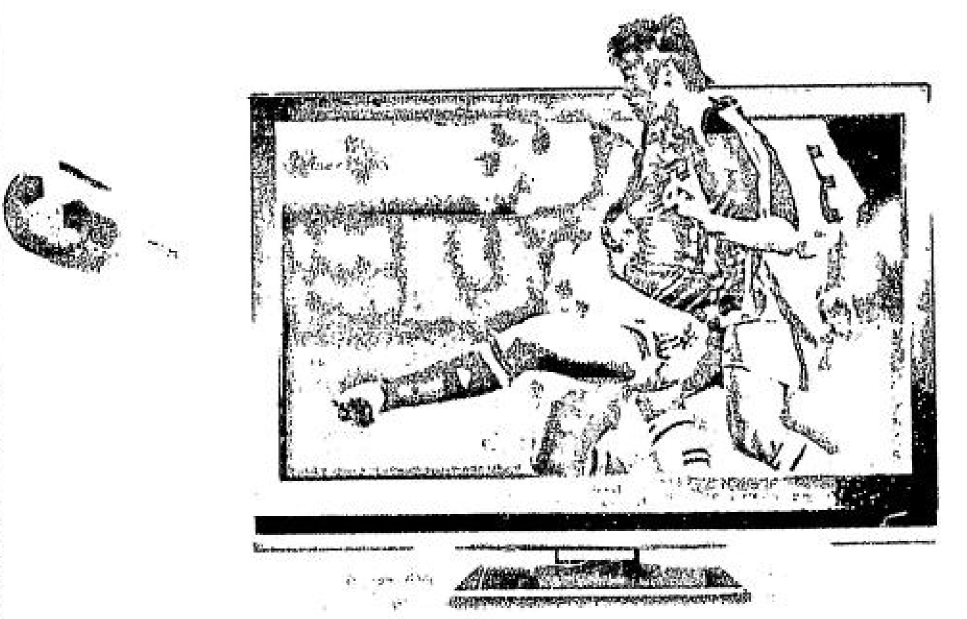

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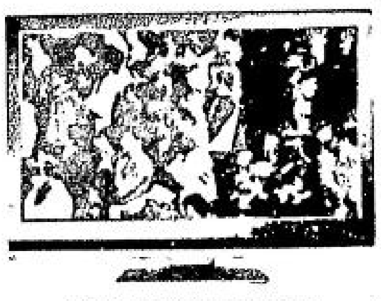

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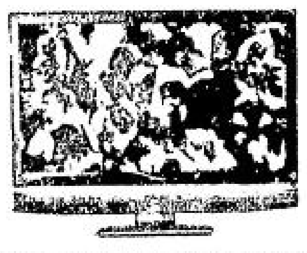

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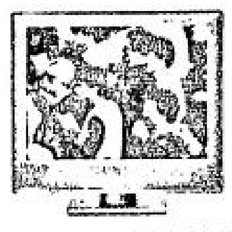

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Asian economic future bright but young are restless

TOKYO—THE ASIAN ECONOMY will keep soaring ahead but faces growing risks as a young and restless population begins to seek a better quality of life rather than the wider good, leading policymakers said yesterday.

Asia, which relies heavily on exports to Europe and the United States, must also overcome historical animosities to stimulate more growth within the region, said participants at the World Economic Forum for East Asia.

A massive and increasingly skilled labor force and huge consumer markets, particularly in China and India, promise a bright future for Asia, said many of the 300 officials, business leaders and academics at the two-day forum.

Growth engine

"I think the global growth will continue and the engine of that growth is Asia," said Kamal Nath, the Indian commerce and industry minister.

"The 21st century is a century for Asia. Fundamentals of Asia are very strong," he said.

The forum, a regional offshoot of the annual forum of world leaders in the Swiss mountain resort of Davos, is the first to be held in Japan, which along with other highly developed parts of Asia faces a graying population.

More youthful nations have reached a point where people are for the first time putting individual wealth first instead of nation-building, said Hassan Marican, president of Malaysia's national oil company Petronas.

Personal freedom

"Younger generations are restless. They require greater personal freedom [though the] Asian economy was built on a more nationalistic process," he said, calling it a risk to growth.

Greater regional cooperation may alleviate the demographic crises in South Korea and Japan as they would be able to import young labor from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), Marican said.

But Asian integration has proved elusive due largely to deep-seated historic animosities. Leaders of fast-growing China and South Korea refuse top-level talks with Japan due to disputes over Tokyo's past aggression.

"There has been some unfortunate history," said Yun Jong-Yong, chief executive of South Korean powerhouse Samsung Electronics.

Unifying factors

"Cultural exchanges and education will create unified relations within the Asian community," he said.

Japanese Trade Minister Toshihiro Nikai echoed this opinion and said a more active flow of people, goods and culture could enhance regional unity.

But Jiang Jianqing, chair of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, said that emerging economies which are fueling regional growth also needed to pay more attention to domestic demand.

"A problem ... is that the region relies on exports for growth. This can lead to a trend of trade protectionism," he said.

Uncertainties, challenges

"The global economy is filled with uncertainties. While we strongly believe in the continued growth of Asia, we must look at the challenges," Jiang said.

The World Economic Forum was set up in 1971 to bring together policymakers and experts in a casual setting. It has since branched out to hold regional meetings and been countered by the rival World Social Forum of anti-globalization activists. *AFP*

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DOLE says wage hikes for everyone

A WAGE INCREASE MAY BE IMPLEMENTED even in regions where there are no pending petitions for a minimum wage hike, according to the Department of Labor and Employment.

Labor Undersecretary Romeo Lagman said the regional tripartite wages and productivity boards have begun reviewing wage levels and monitoring socioeconomic indicators to determine the level of increases in these regions.

He said the wage boards would consider, among other factors, the need to balance the assistance given to minimum wage earners and the employers' capacity to pay.

Lagman said the wage boards may act on their own initiative on the issue, that is, they can issue wage orders even in the absence of a petition.

He said that last year 10 of the regional wage boards issued orders to increase wages in this manner.

The regions where there are pending petitions are Metro Manila, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, 6 Western Visayas, Central Visayas, Northern Mindanao and Davao.

Labor groups have been agitating for an increase in the minimum wage because of the rising cost of living.

In response, the House of Representatives drafted a bill legislating a P125 across-the-board increase in the minimum wage. The bill passed second reading, but did not pass third reading when Congress adjourned last week.

The Arroyo administration has opposed a legislated wage hike, saying it considers the regional wage boards as the best way to determine the issue of wage hikes.

Workers' groups have deplored Malacañang's position, accusing President Macapagal-Arroyo of protecting the interests of big business, which have been opposing the P125 wage hike, at the expense of the working man. *Leila B. Salaverria*

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Who is the Otolaryngologist?
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WHAT DO OTOLARYNGOLOGISTS TREAT?

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2.The Nose and Sinuses (Rhinology)

Nasal stuffiness, sneezing and itchiness, frequent colds, nose bleed, sinus disorder, loss of smell, allergy.

3. The Throat (Laryngology)

Sore throat, hoarseness, lump in the throat, voice and swallowing disorders, sleep apnea.

4. Allergy

Allergic rhinitis, allergy to dust, smoke, food and other irritants that affect the ear, nose and throat.

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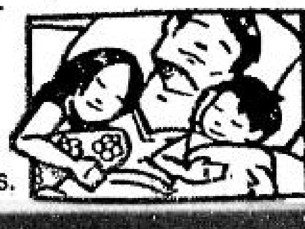
5. Pediatric Otolaryngology

Children with special ENT problems including both defects in the head and neck and developmental delay, tonsil and adenoid infection, airway problems.



6. Head and Neck

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7. Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

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8. What is the Philippine Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery?

The Organization of Certified Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists is composed of 359 members, 7 provincial chapters and 26 accredited training hospital institutions. Doctors undergo 4 years of rigorous residency training and pass a certified Ear, Nose, Throat, Head and Neck Surgery Board examination to become fellows of the society.

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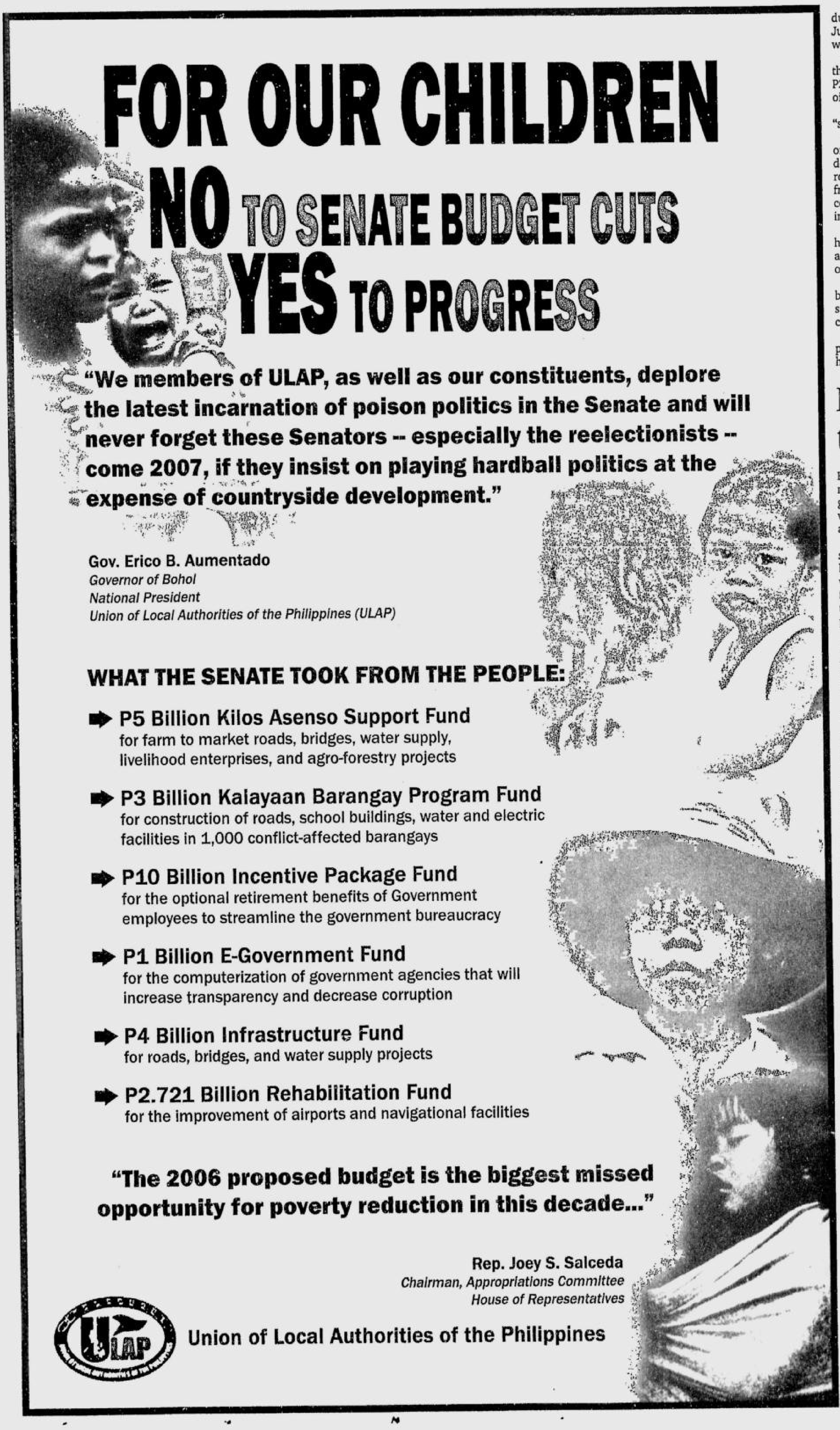

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➨ P4 Billion Infrastructure Fund
for roads, bridges, and water supply projects

➨ P2.721 Billion Rehabilitation Fund
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"The 2006 proposed budget is the biggest missed opportunity for poverty reduction in this decade..."

Rep. Joey S. Salceda
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
House of Representatives

ULAP Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines

Slash in oil tariff won't affect customs take, says BOC

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE CUT IN OIL TARIFFS THAT RESULTED IN oil firms rolling back their diesel prices by 50 centavos a liter would reduce customs collections, but the Bureau of Customs would still meet its target of nearly P200 billion for the year.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said the bureau's surplus collection, which had reached P4.5 billion the last time he checked, would make up for the shortfall resulting from cuts in the oil tariff.

"This [reduction in the tariff rate] would not have an effect on our goal of meeting our target. I am very optimistic that the bureau will meet its target collection," he said in a phone interview.

Morales said that if the oil tariff were reduced to zero from the usual 3 percent from June to December, the Bureau of Customs would lose around P5 billion.

If the tariff were reduced to 1 percent throughout the period, the BIR would lose P2.7 billion. If a 2-percent tariff is imposed on oil, the bureau would lose P1.3 billion.

He described the expected losses as a "small" amount.

Recently, the government reduced the tariff on fuel imports to 2 percent. An executive order issued in May by President Macapagal-Arroyo calls for the lowering of the tariff on oil from 3 percent to either 2 percent or 1 percent, or for its scrapping altogether, depending on a the prices of crude and diesel.

Because of the reduction, oil companies have agreed to roll back their diesel prices and to declare earlier this week a moratorium on a cooking gas price increase.

Morales also said that aside from the P4.5-billion surplus, he expected BOC districts to step up their performance so the bureau could continue meeting its monthly target.

Every month since January, the BOC has been posting surplus earnings even if some districts had not been meeting their collection targets.

Naia inspectors to don gloves

BODY FRISKERS AT THE COUNTRY'S PREmier international airport will soon be issued gloves for a more hygienic and professional way of carrying out their duties, the airport authority said yesterday.

"Hygiene, for both the frisker and the person being [frisked], as well as making them look more professional, are the reasons we will require our friskers to wear gloves," Alfonso Cusi, general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa), told reporters.

Cusi said the Miaa is currently procuring hand gloves for some 200 friskers who conduct luggage and body inspections at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 1 and Naia Centennial Terminal.

"By next week, maybe they could start wearing [the] gloves," Cusi said.

Providing gloves to the friskers is among the steps the Miaa under Cusi is taking to improve the Naia's image.

For years, the Naia has had to make do with a congested and aging terminal buildings while waiting for the court cases surrounding the newer, bigger and more modern Naia 3 to be resolved to pave the way for its opening.

Cusi said the Miaa intends to slowly phase out "human intervention," or the use of additional manpower, as a stop-gap security measure at the Naia.

Instead, Cusi said, the Miaa would focus on using better equipment to provide tighter security at the Naia. *Nikko Dizon*

Corrections

IN THE JUNE 13 ISSUE, a front-page story—"World Day vs Child Labor: Families of working minors get aid"—misstated the number of children who attended the launch of the National Coalition against Child Labor in Commercial Agriculture (NCACLCA) on June 12. About 600—not 200—children and 400 adults attended the launch.

* * *

IN THE JUNE 15 ISSUE, the caption of a front-page photo misstated the place where Dumagat tribal folk and a school principal held a dialogue on education. The dialogue was held in the mountains of Sitio Ilaya, Barangay Sta. Inez, Tanay, Rizal—not in Sta. Inez, Sampaloc, Quezon.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a sidebar on Page A9—"What Went Before"—that accompanied the continuation of a front-page story—"SC scolds Ombudsman: Act on Mega Pacific by June 30"—contained an erroneous sentence in the seventh paragraph. The sentence should have read: "Storage fees for the [automated counting] machines and other materials amount to about P3.9 million a year"—not "Storage fees and other materials amount to about P3.9 million a year."

Ombudsman warns court order could spark crisis

By Nelson F. Flores and Armand N. Nocum

OMBUDSMAN MERCEDITAS GUTIERREZ yesterday said the Supreme Court's rejection of her appeal for the high court to reconsider its order directing the Ombudsman's Office to resolve the Mega-Pacific case by June 30 could precipitate a constitutional crisis.

It could have dangerous consequences because it would undermine the independence of the Ombudsman's Office and turn it into an appendage of the judicial hierarchy, said Gutierrez.

"With the high court's directive, what will prevent lower courts from directing us?" she said.

Gutierrez reiterated her arguments against the SC's May 3 order directing the Ombudsman to wrap up the investigation and file the necessary charges on the P1.3-billion Mega-Pacific computerization deal and submit a report by the end of June.

Last Wednesday, the SC "denied with finality for utter lack of merit" the Ombudsman's motion for reconsideration.

In her motion, Gutierrez argued that in issuing the order, the high court had undermined the independence of the Ombudsman's Office as a constitutional body and denied it due process.

She said her office was holding daily hearings to meet the deadline, but stressed that it was doing so because it was their mandate and not because of the SC directive.

She also cited several SC decisions affirming the independence of the office.

For that, she got a scolding from the high court, which issued a press statement on Wednesday warning that "it [would] not hesitate to exercise its power of contempt against anyone who fails to observe due respect for its directives, mandates, orders and judgments."

The Office of the Ombudsman was created by the 1987 Constitution as an independent constitutional body. The Ombudsman and her deputies, referred to as "protectors of the people," are appointed by the President and are not subject to confirmation by Congress.

Supreme Court Spokesperson Ismael Khan yesterday conceded that the issue between the Ombudsman and the high court was "untried territory."

But he noted that the SC had exercised its contempt powers in the past against officials of a constitutional body like the Commission on Elections.

He advised the Office of the Ombudsman not to trifle with the SC order, recalling how the high court has exercised its contempt powers in the past against government officials, judges, lawyers and other individuals for disobeying its orders.

"They will carry out their order, there's no question about that," said Khan, adding that the Ombudsman's Office could already be cited for contempt if it fails to heed the SC order by June 30.

In 2003, the SC fined Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and four other commissioners in amounts ranging from P5,000 to P20,000 when the poll body ignored orders on the Ang Bagong Bayani-OFW Labor Party vs Comelec case.

The decision was penned by the then Associate Justice and now Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban.

Khan said the penalty could go up to six months' imprisonment "in extreme cases when outside parties are concerned."

But he said the penalty could be lower for "co-equal, independent constitutional bodies" like the Ombudsman.

Pre-need firm releases P140M

PRE-NEED FIRM PACIFIC PLANS INC. (PPI) YESTERDAY said it had started releasing P140 million in tuition payments for this school year on Monday to availing plan holders of traditional education plans in line with the Makati regional trial court's recent approval of the firm's rehabilitation plan.

In a statement, PPI said the checks were delivered through couriers. First time availing plan holders got their payments at the Jaka Building along Ayala Avenue, Makati City, and at PPI branches for provincial plan holders.

PPI president Alfredo J. Non said 12,000 availing plan holders will be receiving their checks via courier.

He added that all availing plan holders for school years 2006 to 2010 would be able to get back their original investments plus a return on investment (ROI) of anywhere from 100 percent to more than 2,000 percent.

Non said there are 3,038 first-time availing plan holders who will be receiving checks totaling P41 million.

In a separate development, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is considering the renewal of PPI's dealer's license, or its permit to sell pre-need plans.

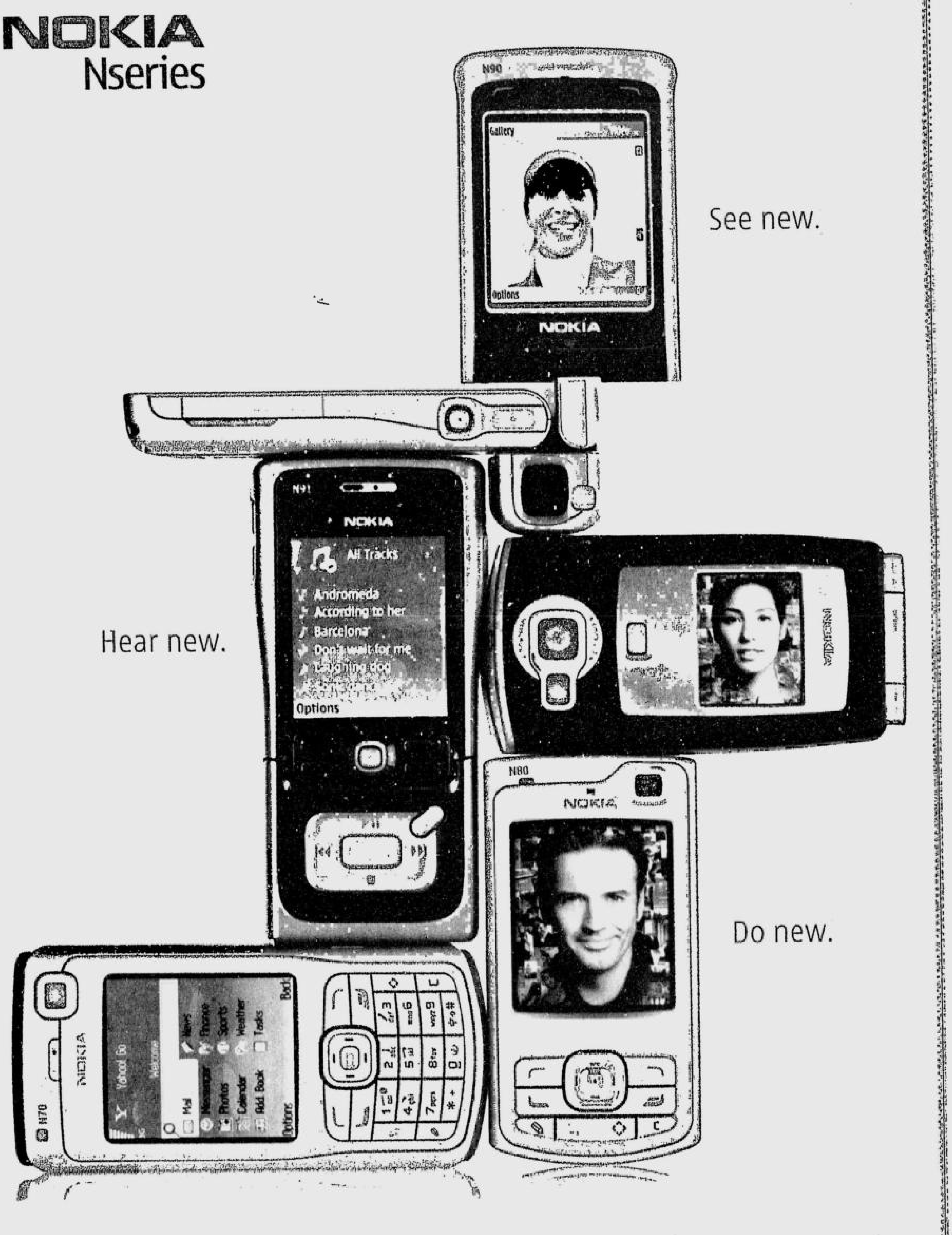
SEC Secretary Gerard Lukban said the SEC would first determine whether PPI is eligible to apply for the renewal of its dealer's license.

Sources earlier said a pre-need firm's eligibility to hold a dealer's license rests on a number of factors, including adequacy of capital, its ability to meet maturing and future obligations, and its ability to readily convert assets to cash.

"The commission will determine whether they are eligible to apply for a renewal of their dealer's license. Then it will consider renewing the license. But right now it has not yet decided on the issue," Lukban said. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OFF TO CANNES. The Philippine delegates to the 53rd Cannes International Advertising Festival 2006 are all set for the international competition as they pose for a group photo with Philippine Daily Inquirer EVP and COO David Valdes (seated 3rd from R) and AdBoard chair Matec Villanueva (center). The Philippines will be represented in the international Radio Lions jury by BBDO's chief creative officer David Guerrero and in the Young Creatives' Competition by Ma. Cecilia Enriquez and John Paul Cuison of Leo Burnett.



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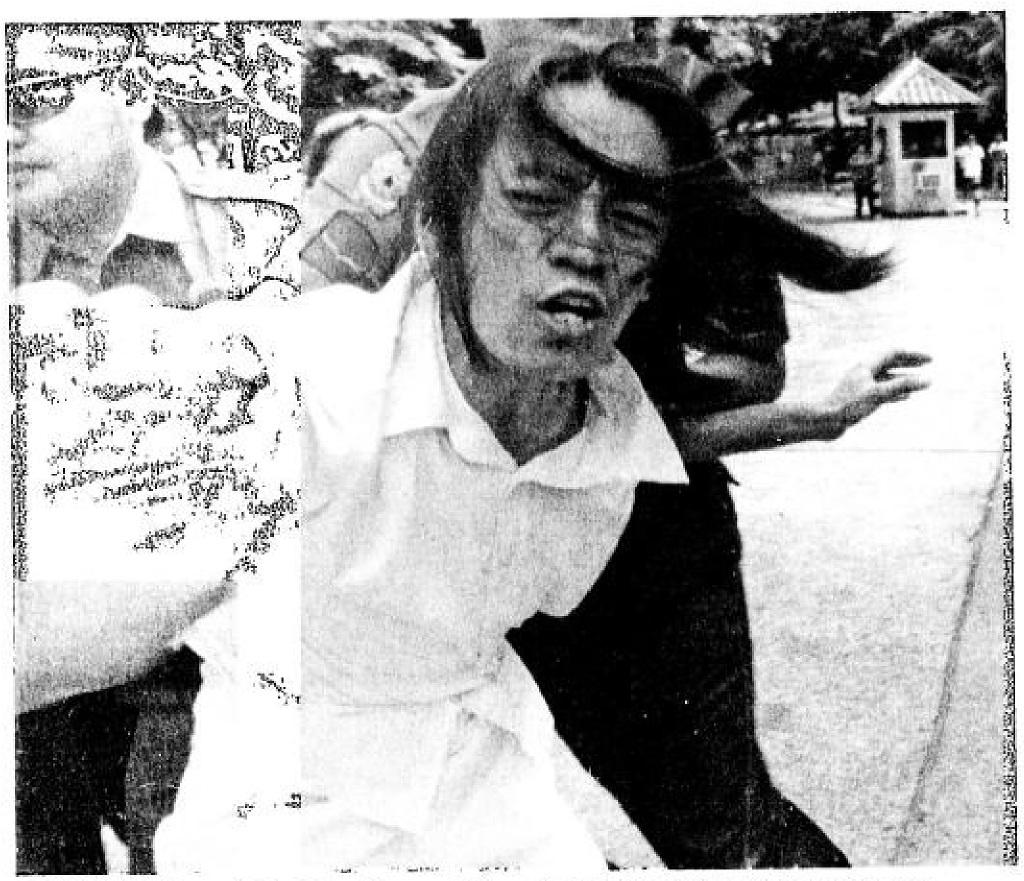
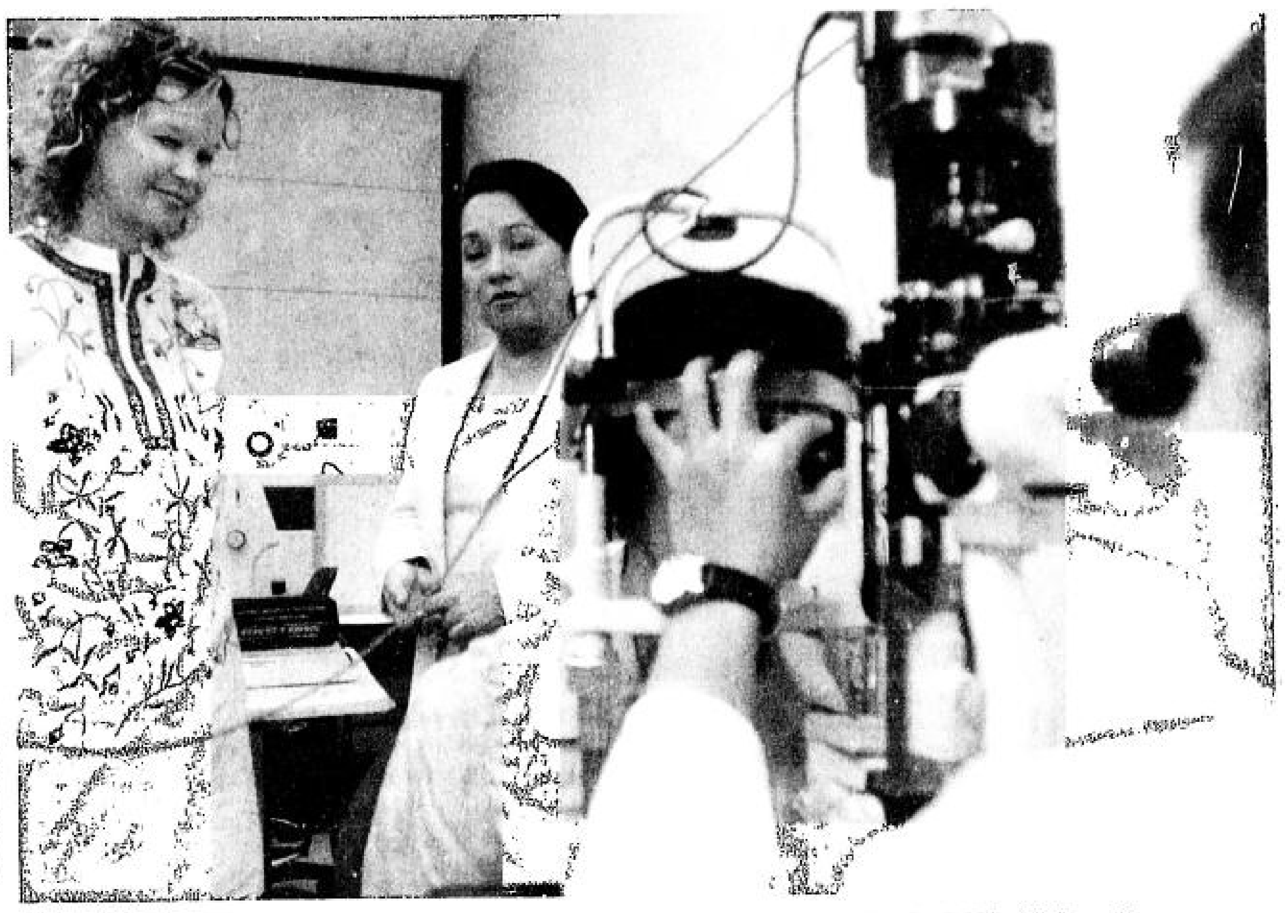


PROTEST still hounds President Arroyo, this one from Nickson Austria, a 3rd year UP medical student protesting tuition increases in state universities. REM ZAMORA



SHE CAME BEARING A GIFT, a P100-million worth of new hospital equipment for the PGH with State Secretary Leire Pajin Iraola (left) donated by a Spanish corporation. The distinguished visitors observe Dr. Jun Pajarillo using the newly donated equipment to treat a patient. PGH now has the country's largest eye center. EDWIN BACASMAS

ONE OTHER PROTESTER is arrested shortly after Ms Arroyo's inauguration and turnover of the Sentro Oftalmologico Jose Rizal at the Philippine General Hospital. REM ZAMORA

GMA hecklers at PGH's donor turnover rites held for sedition

From page A1

new building at the government hospital in Manila yesterday.

In April, Ms Arroyo was heckled by Teresa Pangilinan in the graduation rites of the Cavite State University where Pangilinan unfurled a banner calling for the President's ouster.

On her way to her vehicle after visiting the Sentro Oftalmologico Jose Rizal on Thursday, Ms Arroyo was rudely interrupted by banners and loud chants from a group of more than 40 protesters condemning her administration's neglect of the education sector and the stiff cuts in the PGH budget.

The protesters consisted mostly of students from UP Manila and included some students from Mapua and University of Santo Tomas and a few PGH employees.

Empress without clothes

Terry Ridon, University Student Council (UP Manila) chair, said his group was inspired by Pangilinan.

"As with the act of Teresa Pangilinan at the Cavite State University, this will expose to the entire nation that indeed, the Empress is without clothes. We cannot let her leave our university without [us] being heard. Her visit cannot be a walk in the park, in the middle of the sufferings of the people," Ridon said.

The President was hurriedly whisked away by the Presidential Security Group to her vehicle, but the students continued the chanting even after a number of PSG personnel and policemen confiscated the banners and started arresting some of the protesters.

Just minutes before the incident, the President was all smiles when she witnessed the turnover to the government of the $8-million Sentro Oftalmologico, which was donated by the Agencia Española Cooperation Internacional.

The facility, the largest eye center in the country, is meant to address the high rate of blindness in the country largely due to cataracts that affect close to 2 percent of the population.

Inciting to sedition

Police said they would file charges of inciting to sedition against three protesters—one employee of PGH and two Mapua students.

Suspects Oyo Agustin, 18, of Manggahan, Pasig City; Mark Singuenza, 19, of Project 3, Quezon City; and Eliseo Estropigan, an electrician at the UP-PGH were brought to the Manila Police District (MPD) headquarters for investigation.

The suspects, detained at MPD GAS office as of press time, will be subjected to inquest proceedings, police said.

Supt. Rolando Miranda, Ermita Police Station chief, said the protesters, including the three suspects, shouted "Ibagsak si GMA! (Down with GMA!)" while waving banners.

Agustin and Singuenza, both members of the militant group Anakbayan, denied holding banners during the rally.

Manhandled

The two students said they were only doing community service.

"We just called for an increase in the UP budget," Agustin said. He claimed that the police manhandled him and the others.

Estropigan said he joined the mass action to ask for a P3,000 across-the-board wage increase.

74% hike in tuition

In a prepared statement handed out by one of the protesters after the rally was squelched, Ridon said: "This picket is the opportunity for the students to show right smack in the face of the President how much she has failed in governance and the delivery of social services to the people."

The students were protesting the 74-percent increase in tuition at the UP College of Medicine (from P11,529.50 to P20,045.50) and the perennial budget cuts in the PGH budget that have forced poor patients to pay more.

Defense drift: 'Nicole' …

From page A1

porals Smith, Dominic Duplantis and Keith Silkwood and Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier—may later face under US military law.

Curley recalled interviewing Parmer on Nov. 6 at the Mandarin hotel in Makati City.

Defense lawyers Jose Justiniano (for Silkwood) and Francisco Rodrigo (for Carpentier) had the agent attest to Parmer's interview as included in the NCIS report, mainly on what Smith purportedly told Parmer.

They also had Curley confirm that Parmer also spoke of having received a text message from Philippine Star reporter Ding Cervantes saying that the latter had "information that there was no rape in Subic," and that the charge was "a mere ploy for the police to extort."

Lawyers Benjamin Formoso (for Smith) and Enrico Uyehara (for Duplantis) adopted the cross-examination conducted by their *compañeros.*

Procedural matters

Curley's direct examination, which was conducted by Agaran, mainly concerned procedural matters pertaining to the NCIS interviews.

He recalled that the accused were told of the military equivalent of the Miranda Rights prior to the interviews, that they signed papers waiving their right to counsel, and that the NCIS got authorization to search and seize their personal belongings in their ship, the USS Essex.

The defense lawyers apparently saw an opening and noted the absence of counsel when their clients were interviewed by the NCIS.

This prompted an unresolved exchange between the two panels on whether Philippine legal or US military procedures should apply in that instance.

'Napagdesisyunan ko'

At one point in the hearing, Senior State Prosecutor Emilie Fe de los Santos was stopped from pursuing a clarification with her witness after the defense accused her of "impeaching her own witness."

In redirect examination, De los Santos asked Antonio Ramos, a Filipino-American special agent at the NCIS, if he thought his translation of "*napagdesisyunan ko* (I decided)" into "I was forced to" was accurate.

The line was part of Ramos' English translation of the recantation of Timoteo Soriano Jr., Filipino driver of the Starex van where the accused allegedly conspired to rape Nicole.

Written in Filipino, the recantation contained Soriano's denial of his first statement where he was quoted as saying that he witnessed "gang rape" on the night of Nov. 1, 2005.

De los Santos posed the question after Rodrigo called the court's attention to Soriano's statements as translated by Ramos, particularly a portion saying that the driver was forced to sign his first statement.

"Mr. Witness, showing to you a paragraph which reads, '*Natatakot akong mapasama sa kaso, at kasama ng kagustuhang umuwi, napagdesisyunan ko na lumagda,*'" De los Santos said, adding:

"Your translation of the same sentence read, 'Out of fear that I would be included in the case, coupled with my desire to go home, I was forced to sign.' Do you think '*napagdesisyunan*' is the same as 'forced to'?"

'Impeaching own witness'

Rodrigo rose to object, saying: "Your honor, may we know if the prosecutor is impeaching her own witness? Because if so, we would gladly join in."

"No, I am not trying to impeach the witness," De los Santos said, adding that she was merely seeking Ramos' clarification.

Ruling on the objection, Judge Benjamin Pozon stopped De los Santos from pursuing the question: "We are Filipinos here… I think we know what's the difference between '*napagdesisyunan*' and 'forced to.' Prosecutor De los Santos, please go to your next point."

The prosecutor submitted and concluded her redirect examination.

Being fluent in Filipino, Ramos had been assigned by the NCIS to translate five sworn statements of witnesses, including the second statement of Soriano.

Gang rape

Soriano had said that Paquito Torres, chief of the Intelligence and Investigation Office of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority's Law Enforcement Division, prepared his statement, and, to his objection, inserted a line to indicate that he had witnessed a gang rape inside the van.

During cross-examination, Rodrigo asked Ramos if he remembered translating Soriano's statement that read: "After I said I did not witness any rape, Torres punched me twice in the back. Torres took the statement with his typewriter… I objected and I told him I didn't witness a gang rape. But [Torres said that] if it was omitted, I would be included in the case."

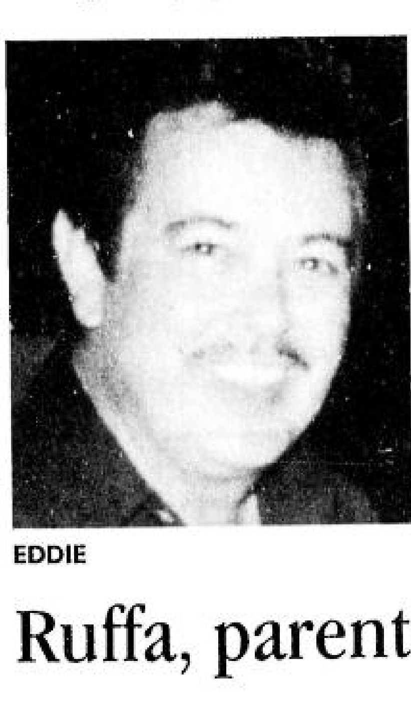
Ramos, the last NCIS agent to take the stand for the prosecution, attested to the accuracy of the translation, but said when asked later that he did not personally witness the alleged coercion.

He also corroborated the earlier testimony of his colleague, Special Agent Guy Papageorge, who had attested to his reports on his interrogation of Carpentier and Smith.

Ramos was present when Papageorge interviewed Carpentier and Smith on the USS Essex on the early morning on Nov. 3, 2005.

Carpentier had told Papageorge that he saw Smith with an "Asian female" at the Neptune Bar, a night spot inside the free port where the corporal and the complainant met.

He said the two later boarded the rented van where the alleged rape occurred.



EDDIE

ANNABELLE

RUFFA

Ruffa, parents blame 'illiterate' maid …

From page A1

enue asking them to explain a P3.2-million tax liability.

The Gutierrezes denied they had intentionally refused to cooperate with the revenue officers sent to their house to examine the books of accounts of their company—Royal Era Entertainment Inc.

Royal Era is engaged in production, promotion and marketing of movies, television shows, recordings and live shows.

Speaking through lawyer Francisco Muñez, the Gutierrezes yesterday said that they did not show New Era's books to the revenue officers because of the failure of Trinidad D. Madulin, a housemaid and cook, to inform them of her receipt of the BIR letters.

"Being illiterate, Madulin did not know the importance of said letters and failed to inform respondents of their existence. Had she immediately notified respondents about them, they would have willingly coordinated and cooperated with the revenue officer," the Gutierrezes said in a six-page motion.

Barred entry

The Gutierrezes said the revenue officers, who were supposed to deliver the second request for examination of Royal Era's accounts on March 27, 2006, were not allowed to enter their house for security reasons.

It was Madulin who received the BIR letter of authority dated March 17. The letter is sent to suspected tax evaders so they could explain their tax liabilities before the BIR files cases against them.

But in the complaint filed on April 7, the BIR said "the respondents refused to accept" the second letter of authority dated March 27.

'Fresh opportunity'

This time, the Gutierrezes said they would be willing to present the records of Royal Era if they would be given a fresh opportunity to do so. But they asked that the case be remanded to the BIR.

"Thus, in order to afford the respondents the chance to present the records, sans the contentious and adversarial atmosphere of a preliminary investigation, respondents beseech this Office to remand the instant case for administrative reinvestigation so that respondents would be given the opportunity to present their books of accounts and other accounting records for examination," they said.

Remanding the case to the BIR, according to the respondents, would also erase doubts that they were deprived of due process and "secure them against hasty, malicious and oppressive prosecution" in public.

In the tax evasion case filed against Ruffa Gutierrez, a former Miss World runner-up now married to a Turkish millionaire, and her celebrity parents, the BIR said the three had failed to pay tax obligations for 2003 and 2004.

Under-declaration of income

The BIR said Royal Era blatantly violated several provisions of the Tax Code by underdeclaring its income for 2003 and 2004 even when it received millions of pesos in commissions from GMA Network Inc.

Investigation by revenue officers showed that Royal Era received from GMA Network P2.2 million in 2003 and P4 million in 2004, but data gathered by the tax bureau showed that it under-declared its income by 40 percent in 2003 and 222 percent in 2004.

"Notwithstanding the fact that the company was able to belatedly file its annual income tax return for 2003 and 2004, its attempt to forestall the BIR's investigation was rendered futile, as it still failed to declare its true and correct income for the said years," BIR National Investigation Division chief Arnel Guballa said during the filing of the case.

Ramos backing Cha-cha through signature mode

By Norman Bordadora and TJ Burgonio

FORMER PRESIDENT Fidel Ramos has made a commitment to help President Macapagal-Arroyo's Charter Change Advocacy Commission (AdCom) in pushing the shift to a parliamentary government through a people's initiative.

In a statement issued yesterday, AdCom chair Lito Monico Lorenzana said Ramos made the pledge at a meeting on Wednesday with the commission members.

Ramos had earlier called on Ms Arroyo to cut her term short in order to make the shift easier. But he has since backed down on the call.

According to Lorenzana, a member of the Constitutional Commission that produced a draft charter late last year, Ramos promised to help the AdCom "in its advocacy to push for wide-ranging reforms in the Constitution, particularly the shift from a bicameral-presidential system to a unicameral-parliamentary system."

"President Ramos has agreed to become AdCom's constitutional warrior and wants to personally witness the people's initiative to succeed," he said.

Sigaw ng Bayan, a coalition that is pushing the people's initiative, is set to file a petition for amendment at the Commission on Elections. It claims to have gathered nine million signatures.

'Almost dead'

But in the estimation of opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, the Malacanang-backed dual-track move to amend the 1987 Constitution "seems to be almost dead in the water."

Osmeña told a press forum at the Senate that the Sigaw ng Bayan-led people's initiative and the House-initiated constituent assembly to amend the Charter had not prospered because of inherent flaws.

"Malacañang is running through an insurmountable problem in the 'pirma' (signature campaign), which is verifying all the signatures that they claim to have gathered," Osmeña said. "And essentially, many of the signatures are fake."

2 problems

Osmeña also said the administration-dominated House was having a tough time mustering the three-fourths vote to amend the Charter in a constituent assembly.

"They have two problems there. No. 1, they can't even get 195 signatures. And No. 2, the Senate will not agree to voting jointly on any proposed amendment to the Constitution. They have nowhere else to go," he said.

The heads of the Senate and House committees on constitutional amendments met twice to thresh out the touchy issue of whether Congress should vote jointly or separately in amending the Charter—to no avail.

The conflict stemmed from a constitutional provision stating that any amendment to or revision of the Charter may be proposed by Congress upon "a vote of three-fourths of all its members."

Osmeña likewise said he did not see the Senate softening on its stance against the House position to go it alone on Charter change even under a friendlier presidency under Sen. Manuel Villar.

Based on a term-sharing agreement, Villar, an administration senator, is to take over the chamber's top post from Sen. Franklin Drilon when Congress opens its third regular session on July 24.

"On a personal basis, yes, Senator Villar would be on better speaking terms with Malacañang than Senator Drilon. That's an openly admitted fact," Osmeña said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, June 16, 2006
10th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 K 19:9, 11-16
Gospel: Matthew 5:27-32

Jesus said to his disciples, "You have heard that it was said: Do not commit adultery. But I tell you this: anyone who looks at a woman to satisfy his lust has in fact already committed adultery with her in his heart.

"So, if your right eye causes you to sin, pull it out and throw it away! It is much better for you to lose a part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell. If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away! It is better for you to lose a part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell.

"It was also said: anyone who divorces his wife must give her a written notice of divorce. But what I tell you is this: If a man divorces his wife except in the case of unlawful union, he causes her to commit adultery. And the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

Commentary

Elijah looks for God in the usual places: the wind, the fire, the earthquake, the places of power; but God is not there. God comes in a whisper of wind but Elijah has difficulty seeing/receiving God that way, because he has disobeyed. He killed the prophets of Baal, and God did not tell him to do that. No longer is he to be prophet in Israel, he must look for another because of his decision to do what he was not commanded.

And Jesus gives commands to us. They are old ones: no adultery; but now they are extended to all, men as well as women and they take on depth and intensity. We are to be serious about holiness and obedience, not lethargic.

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Gov't all out vs Joma; murder charges set

From page A1

rakami, was wounded in the attack.

In a separate affidavit filed with the justice department, Veronica Tabara said she was "certain" that Sison and other communist leaders were "responsible" for killing her husband, whose policy differences with them resulted in a serious split within the CPP and NPA in the early 1990s.

Arturo Tabara and his son-in-law, Stephen Ong, were killed in the parking lot of SM Fairview in Quezon City on Sept. 26, 2004.

In statements issued following the two killings, the CPP and NPA said Kintanar and Tabara were meted out the death penalty for their "criminal and counterrevolutionary activities."

Personal knowledge

In their separate affidavits, the two widows admitted having "personal knowledge of the system and policies" of the CPP and NPA.

According to both women, Sison was the chair of the CPP Central Committee and the person behind the aliases "Amado Guerrero" and "Armando Liwanag." In previous media statements, Sison had denied using the aliases "Amado Guerrero" or "Armando Liwanag."

"I have personal knowledge in the tactical operation of the CPP/NPA through its Special Operation Group and their modes of operation to eliminate/neutralize the uncooperative government officials and private individuals, including the killing of my husband who was wrongly, maliciously and unjustly judged as a counterrevolutionary," Jopson-Kintanar said in her affidavit.

She named Benito Tiamzon and his wife Wilma, both alleged members of the Political Bureau and the Executive Committee of the CPP Central Committee; Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, CPP spokesperson, and several John Does as among those who "conspired" to murder the former NPA chief.

"My husband was one of those who questioned the assumption of Sison as the chairman of the CPP/NPA/NDF even after he left the country," Jopson-Kintanar said.

She said that Sison was "jealous" of Kintanar who propelled the NPA to a peak strength of 25,000 members in the late 1980s while Sison chose to stay abroad.

Released from jail by President Corazon Aquino in 1986, Sison sought asylum in the Netherlands the following year. Ever since, he has been issuing statements about the CPP and the NPA from Utrecht. The Philippine government, however, has cancelled Sison's passport.

Jealousy

"This jealousy did not cease with my husband out of the party. Sison might have feared that my husband, because of his following and credibility as a good leader/cadre, had the capability to attract dissenters or "rejectionists" of the CPP/NPA/NDF [National Democratic Front] into a parallel organization that could challenge the CPP/NPA/NDF," she said.

Veronica Tabara said Sison's anger toward her husband was rooted in an "internal debate" on strategy and tactics within the CPP in 1992.

According to Veronica, the debates led to a split between the pro-Sison group called the "reaffirmists" and the anti-Sison group, or the "rejectionists," which included her husband, Kintanar and Filemon Lagman, who was killed in early 2001.

Tabara was one of the leading organizers of the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa sa Pilipinas, which later coalesced with the the Revolutionary Proletarian Army and the Manila-based Alex Boncayao Brigade. The RPMP-RPA/ABB group claims it is active not only on Negros island but in other parts of the country as well.

"The split of the rejectionists group angered Joma (Sison) and other leaders who remained with the CPP/NPA/NDF and even branded the rejectionists as counterrevolutionaries," Veronica Tabara said.

The plan to file murder cases in the Netherlands against Sison seem to indicate that the Arroyo administration is tightening the noose on the communist leaders.

Peace talks off

In July last year, the NDF announced it was suspending peace talks with what it described as the "crumbling" administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The umbrella group of all communist organizations in the Philippines said it would wait for the next administration before resuming peace negotiations.

The talks had been stalled for a year after communist negotiators insisted that the Arroyo administration use its influence with the United States and the European Union to get the CPP and NPA removed from the US and EU lists of international terrorist organizations.

Despite the breakdown of peace negotiations, the NDF on June 6 pressed the Arroyo administration to resume talks on alleged human rights violations by both sides.

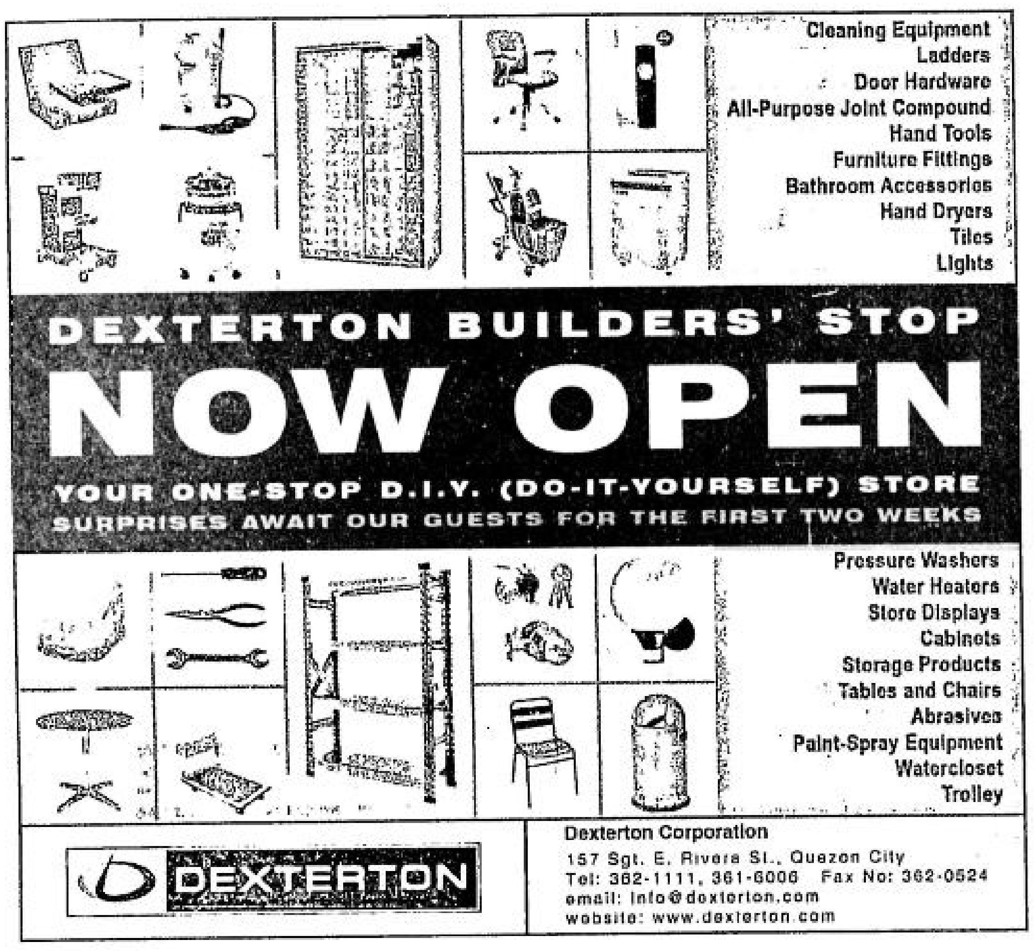
The NDF's call for discussions on the cases coincided with a resurgence of killings of political activists around the country which leftist groups blamed on the Arroyo administration. An INQUIRER tally shows at least 230 militants and activists had been killed around the country since Ms Arroyo assumed office in 2001.

Ms Arroyo has accused the CPP and NPA of colluding with her political foes and renegade soldiers in an alleged bid to oust her in February. Police have filed with Department of Justice prosecutors a complaint of rebellion and insurrection against about 50 leftist leaders, including Sison.

Communist thugs

Talking tough before graduates of the Philippine Military Academy in March, Ms Arroyo identified "communist thugs who lived by an outmoded godless ideology, devoid of the values that you live by and die for everyday" as one of the two main security threats to the country.

She named "terrorist extremists who have so perverted religion" as the other main threat. *With a report from PDI Research*



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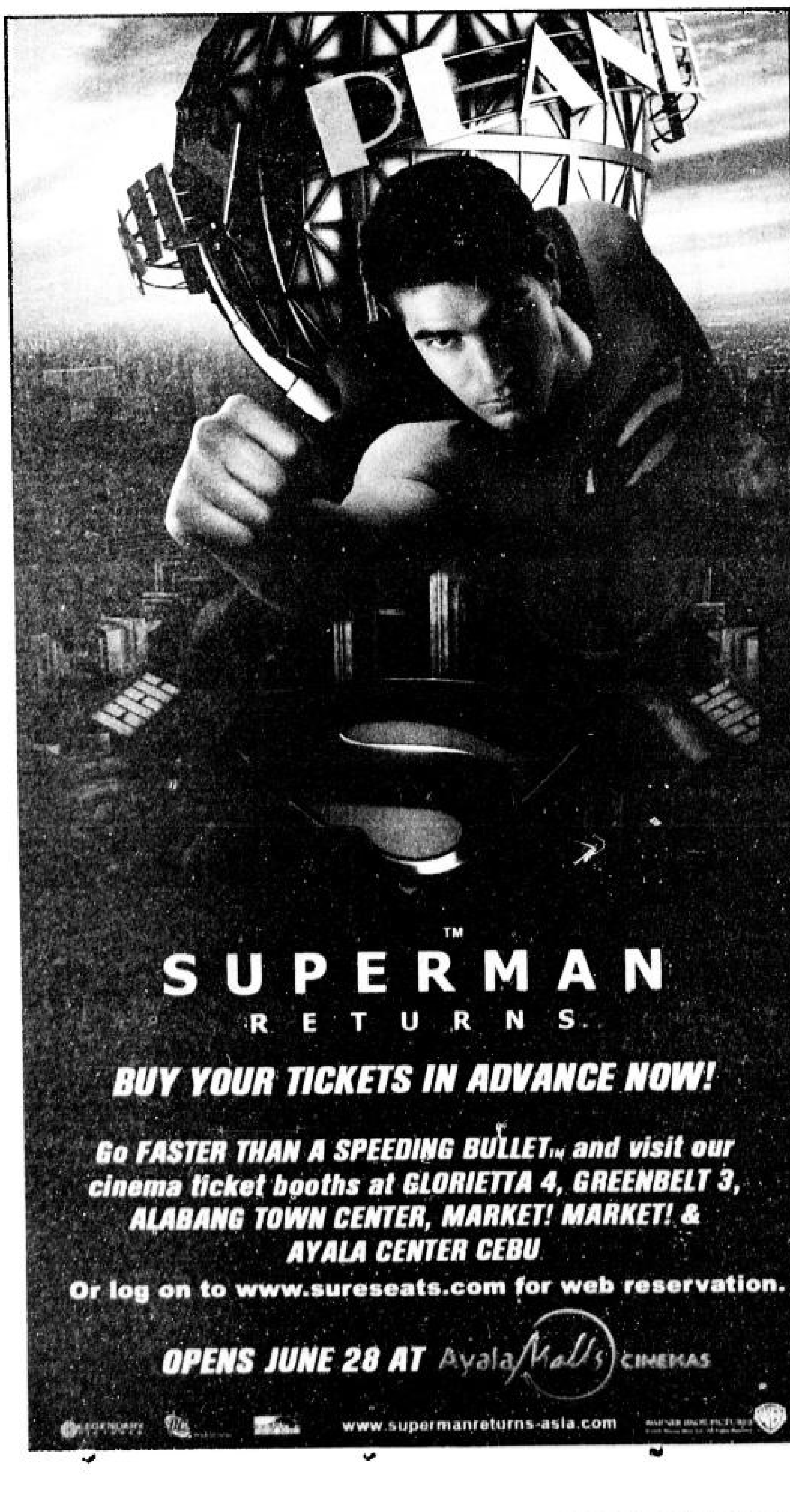

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Raid on Erap 5 was anti-Red operation

From page A1

CPP committee in Metro Manila and Rizal.

The arresting team turned out to have been composed of agents of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Military Intelligence Group (MIG)-15 and cops belonging to the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

AFP officials yesterday said Lt. Col. Henry Robinson had been relieved as commander of MIG-15, the Isafp's operating unit in Metro Manila, pending the military's investigation of the alleged torture of the Estrada supporters.

It was the Isafp chief, Commodore Leonardo Calderon, who ordered Robinson's relief, according to the officials who spoke on condition that they not be named.

"As a matter of procedure, [Robinson was relieved] to pave the way for the pretrial investigation," one official said.

Robinson will reportedly step down on June 17. The sources refused to name his replacement, invoking the confidential nature of Isafp assignments.

AFP spokespersons neither confirmed nor denied Robinson's relief.

Robinson was apparently one of the two MIG-15 officers who, along with six enlisted men, were ordered to undergo pretrial investigation preparatory to court-martial for "inflicting injury" on Dionisio and company.

The AFP had refused to identify the eight MIG-15 personnel, saying it wanted to protect its operatives from retaliation by members of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

No politics

The military insiders said politics had nothing to do with the raid on Eustaquio's house.

It was "a job against the communist movement" and was "not meant to harass the Estrada group," said one of the sources.

"The UMDJ is just a small group, you know," he said, indicating that if the military had wanted to harass Estrada supporters, it would have gone after more prominent people or groups allied with the deposed President.

De Guzman

On May 11, the military arrested Delfin de Guzman at his house in Norzagaray, Bulacan, the insiders said.

De Guzman is purportedly a top CPP official in Central Luzon. He was said to have confessed to involvement in the killing of former communist leaders Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara. *(Story on Page A1.)*

He has supposedly submitted an affidavit saying that his cell was on a mission to kill ranking officials of the Arroyo administration and that part of the CPP's 3-year program was to "infiltrate civil society."

Shortly after De Guzman's arrest, a military informer confirmed his statements, the insiders said.

Both De Guzman and the informer separately mentioned Mike Gamara, a purported key member of the team that killed Kintanar and Tabara.

"What [each] said complemented [the other's statement]," the insiders said.

Tracking 'Gamara'

This was how the insiders related the turn of events:

The Isafp tracked "Gamara" to his supposed house in Quezon City but failed to find him.

The informer, who was still in contact with Gamara, set up a meeting with the latter by mobile phone.

"They were supposed to meet in Balintawak, but Dionisio (aka Gamara) sent a text message saying they should meet at Oasis instead. It was their code for [the house in] Kamuning, Quezon City," the sources said.

As soon as the MIG-15 operatives confirmed that Dionisio was inside the house, they moved in.

The informer, who was present when Dionisio et al. were hauled away in an unmarked military vehicle, identified each one except PO3 Curameng.

"He could not place him (Curameng). But as the others were being brought out, he would say each person's name and add that he was a member of the collective," said one of the insiders.

The source also confirmed the report that Isapf chief Calderon was not immediately told of the arrests.

Calderon was supposedly at a meeting outside Metro Manila at the time.

Baking bread

One of the insiders said military agents were confident about arresting rebels even without warrants because of the principle of a continuing crime.

Under the rules of court, a warrant is not needed to arrest a person committing a continuing crime, such as rebellion.

Asked how sure the Isafp was of the information that Dionisio was Gamara, or that De Guzman and the military informer were supplying correct information, the insider said: "It's like asking a baker if he knows how to bake bread.

"It's their (the military agents') job to go after communists."

The AFP initially denied having Dionisio and company in custody, and admitted to it only 48 hours later.

On May 25, the Department of Justice ordered the release of the five men for "insufficient evidence."

Pretrial probe

On May 26, apparently smarting from the public backlash, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga ordered the Judge Advocate General's Office to conduct a pretrial investigation.

At that time, AFP public information office chief Col. Tristan Kison said it was possible that MIG-15 head Robinson was among those to be investigated, but added that the latter did not take part in the torture.

Kison also said no one among the eight MIG-15 operatives was relieved. But later, he confirmed that they were restricted to quarters at the Isafp compound in Camp Aguinaldo pending the results of the investigation.

Nearly three weeks after Senga issued his order, the pretrial investigation has yet to start.

Filipinism

Dionisio et al. would later say that they suffered physical and mental torture in the hands of their abductors.

A physician who later examined and treated Dionisio said three of his ribs were broken and his body bore contusions that could not have been self-inflicted.

On his hospital bed shortly after the Isapf turned him over to the police, Dionisio denied he was a communist.

He said Filipinism, the ideology espoused by the UMDJ, was incompatible with communism.

He added that according to their ideology, Filipinos should be the rulers and priests of their own country.

Beltran to invoke SC ruling in bid for freedom

PARTY-LIST REP. CRISPIN BELTRAN will use a Supreme Court order stopping the government from pursuing a rebellion case against his co-accused to ask a lower court for his freedom.

Lawyer Romeo Capulong said he will be filing the motion today or on Monday at the Makati court of Judge Encarnacion Jaja Moya.

"We will invoke the status quo order and the principle of equal protection under the law since he [Beltran] is similarly situated as with the other accused," Capulong said.

"The so-called evidence against them is identical and so there is no more reason to keep [Beltran] in jail. He was illegally arrested and was subjected to an invalid inquest proceeding," Capulong said.

Status quo order

The Supreme Court issued a status quo order on June 5, effectively stopping the Department of Justice from prosecuting the case against Beltran, the Batasan 5 and 40 others.

SC spokesperson Ismael Khan said the lower court should also stop its proceedings "in compliance with the status quo order."

Lawyer Jose Manuel Diokno, the counsel of Vicente Ladlad, one of Beltran's co-accused, dismissed the DOJ claim that the order had become moot and academic since the prosecutors had already finished their preliminary investigation and the case had already been filed in court.

"That's crazy. They will be courting contempt if they continue. The highest court in the land has already said that this beautiful rebellion case they filed cannot continue. Their hands are tied," Diokno said.

Capulong pointed out that the high tribunal specifically "ordered, commanded and directed" the DOJ to maintain the status quo effective June 5 "until further orders from" the high court.

Diokno said he hoped the high court would eventually rule in favor of his client and nullify the DOJ preliminary investigation.

The petition, filed by Ladlad and others, accused the prosecutors of acting "with manifest bad faith, without or in excess of jurisdiction and with grave abuse of discretion during the preliminary investigation."

Ladlad, an officer of the Bayan Muna party-list group, said he doubted that the Supreme Court order would stop their alleged "political persecution" by the authorities. *Philip C. Tubeza with a report from Norman Bordadora*

Jamby, Satur to take RP 'rights violations' to UN

By TJ Burgonio

BUOYED BY THE positive response of a UN official, Sen. Jamby Madrigal is bringing evidence of the country's "worsening human rights situation" to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Switzerland.

Madrigal and Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo will leave next week for Geneva in time for the UNHCHR's 13th session of the Meeting of Special Rapporteurs from June 19 to 23, the senator said yesterday.

The opposition lawmaker said she had spoken with an official of the body's Special Rapporteur on Freedom Expression on the matter and had been asked to submit evidence to back it up.

"Representative Ocampo and I will visit the UNHCHR in Geneva for this purpose. We shall bring to the attention of the UNHCHR the gravity of the situation here," Madrigal said in a statement.

Madrigal said she was seeking UN intervention and resorting to its instruments, particularly the Special Procedure, "to hold the Philippine state accountable for its human rights violations."

"Justice is elusive in the Philippines; we have no recourse but to resort to this Special Procedure in the United Nations to prevent impunity and to stop the return of draconian rule in the Philippines," she said.

This procedure, she added, "is the last straw of hope in a country plunged in a deep political crisis where the rule of law hangs by a thread."

If they succeed, the senator said, they would ask the UNHCHR to send a Special Rapporteur to Manila to conduct an investigation.

"We shall also ask that the Philippines be removed from the Human Rights Council since its government has lost the moral ascendancy to protect the rights of the people," she said.

"To borrow Ms Arroyo's words last Independence Day, the 'day of reckoning' has arrived to hold the Philippine government liable for their actions."

The senator on March 2 wrote Ambeyi Ligabo, Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, to take action on the arrest and detention of critics, the dispersal of rallies and the harassment of the media by the Arroyo administration.

"The Philippines is already in a state of undeclared martial law where the rule of law no longer exists and the fundamental freedoms enjoyed by the people are fast disappearing through the blatant and inhumane disregard by the Arroyo administration," she said in her letter.

The senator, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, some congressmen, three Catholic bishops and several others were dispersed with water cannons by the police while holding a prayer procession in Manila on Oct. 14 last year.

Ligabo wrote the back on March 14 to say he was examining the material sent by the senator "with a view of possible action, as appropriate, in the framework of my mandate."

PCGG has new commish

AN OLD HAND AT THE Presidential Commission on Good Government has risen through the ranks to become its newest commissioner.

Former PCGG Director Tereso Javier has been appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo to replace William Dichoso .

Javier's appointment was announced during flag-raising rites at the PCGG on June 5. His appointment was not revealed until yesterday, however.

Javier, an Ateneo Law School graduate, retired from the PCGG on April 4 as director for assets and management when he reached the mandatory retirement age of 65. He joined the PCGG in 1987 during the term of chair Ramon Diaz. He will handle the legal affairs office.

Javier's appointment completes the roster of PCGG commissioners with Camilo Sabio as chair. Aside from Javier, the other commissioners are Ricardo Abcede, former Sandiganbayan justice Narciso Nario and lawyer Nicasio Conti.

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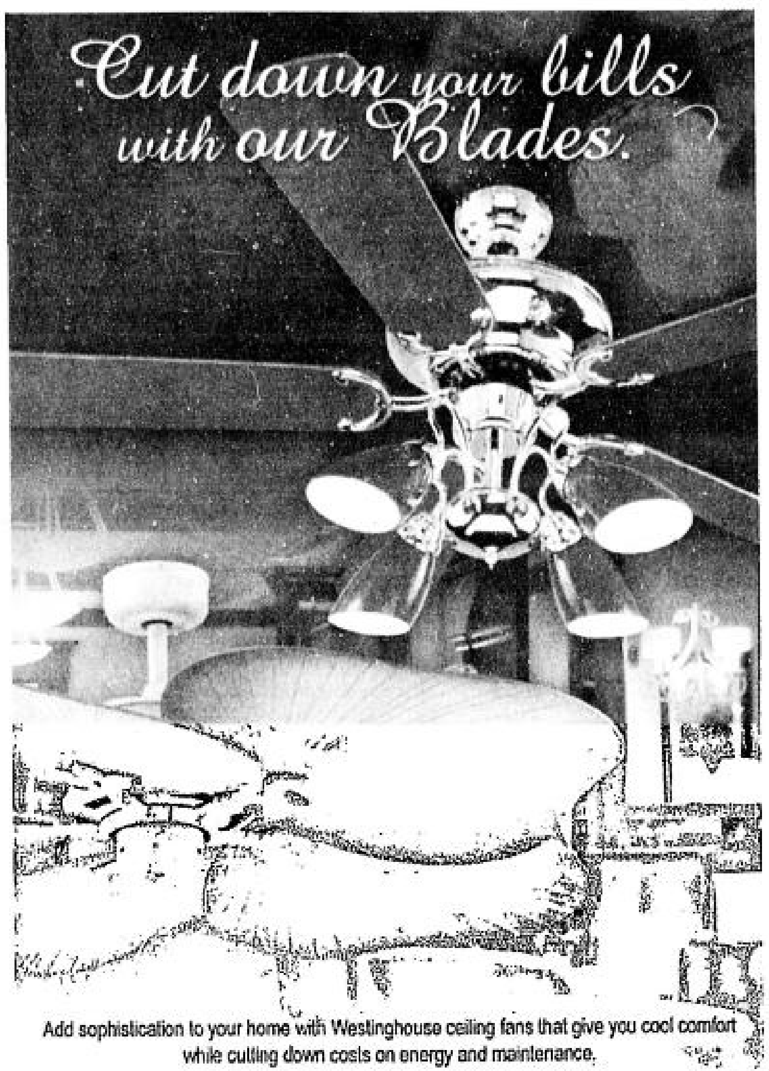
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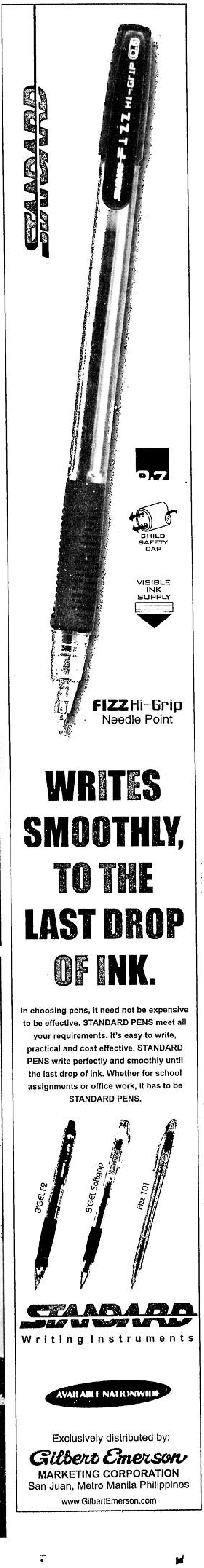
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WCARM014	1.5	11.2	15x23x27	₱17,230	₱18,091	₱19,265
WCARP019	2	10.5	17x26x29	₱21,587	₱22,104	₱23,052
WCARP024	2.5	9.2	17x26x29	₱24,672	₱25,430	₱26,245

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*WCOND008	0.75	10.3	13x19x18	₱12,397	₱12,910	₱13,443
*WCONS010	1	10.5	13x19x24	₱13,504	₱14,171	₱14,883
*WCONT011	1.25	11.2	15x23x27	₱14,576	₱15,293	₱16,149
WCONT014	1.5	11.2	15x23x27	₱16,164	₱16,831	₱17,799
WCONR019	2	10.5	17x26x29	₱20,608	₱21,315	₱22,140
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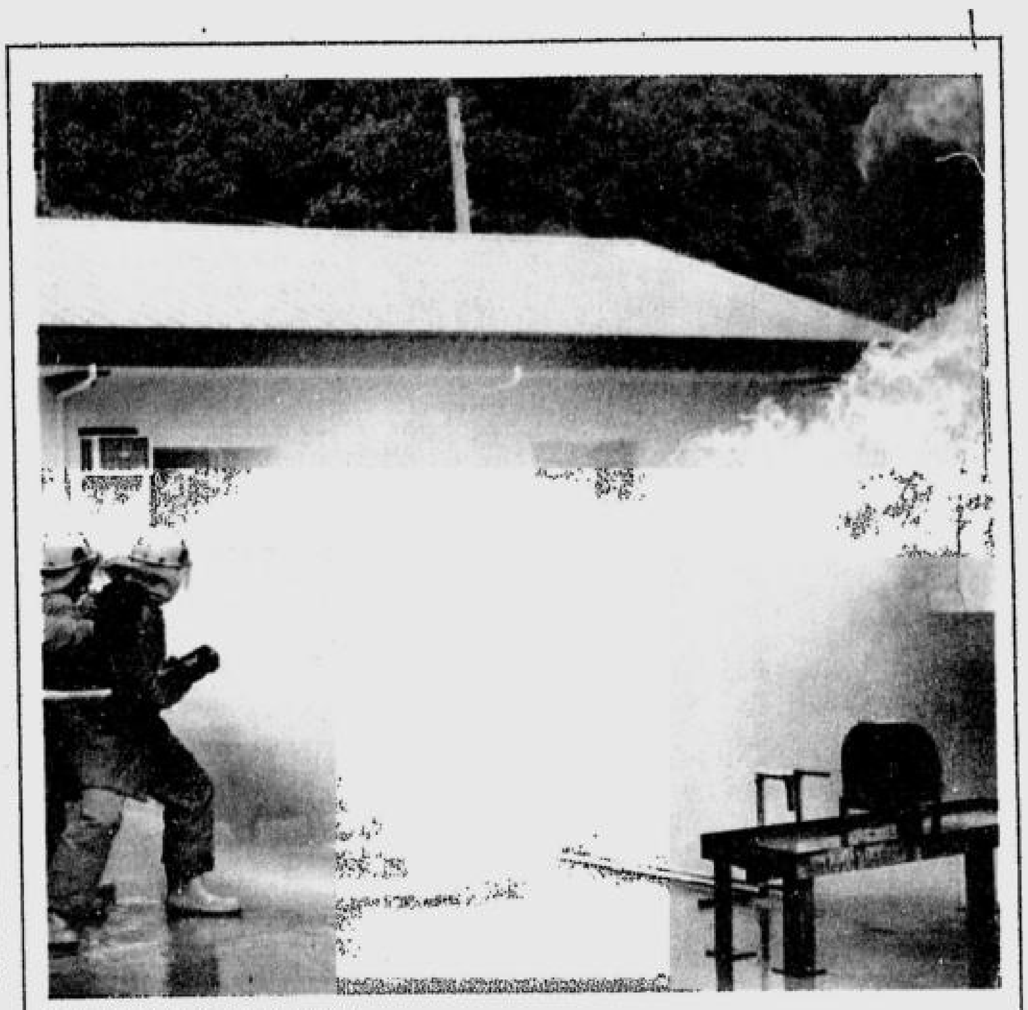

OIL FIRMS' OLYMPICS
Petroleum players test their crisis preparedness skills in the Emergency Response Olympics (ERO) 2006. Organized by Total (Philippines) Corp., the olympics is an annual competition testing the firefighting and first aid skills of local oil firms' employees. This year's ERO was held in Mariveles, Bataan, with Petron Corporation, Pilipinas Shell and PTT participating. Overall champion was Total's Bataan Terminal.

In RP, expensive medicines must come with a prayer

STROKE SURVIVOR EDMUND LISING IS supposed to take four tablets of two medicines each day, including the antihypertension drug Norvasc. But to save money, the 58-year-old retiree takes only two a day, supplementing the dose each time with a fervent prayer.

Lising is luckier than most Filipinos. According to government statistics, 70 percent of the 85 million Filipinos have no regular access to lifesaving drugs.

Next to affluent Japan, the cash-strapped Philippines has Asia's second most costly medicines, with some drugs priced 5 to 45 times higher than the same medicines sold in India or Pakistan, the data shows.

Fed up with the situation, officials, consumer groups, health workers and fair trade advocates have teamed up in Effective Medicine at Affordable Prices, a coalition targeting multinational pharmaceutical companies with the aim of cutting the staggering cost of medicines in the country. The group is supporting legislation that would make importing cheaper drugs possible and encourage the production of generic drugs.

The campaign's launch came as the Philippine government is battling the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer over plans to import cheaper Norvasc from Pakistan.

'Patent infringement'

In March, Pfizer sued two government agencies – the Philippine International Trading Corp. and the Bureau of Food and Drugs Administration – for alleged patent infringement.

It asked a suburban Manila court to order BFAD to revoke an approved import registration for the antihypertension medicine covered by Pfizer's patent. The 17-year patent expires in June 2007.

PITC head Roberto Pagdanganan said his office last year submitted to BFAD 80 sample tablets from Pakistan so that the government could be ready to import the cheaper medicine once Pfizer's patent expires.

A 5-mg tablet of Norvasc sells for 86 US cents in the Philippines, nearly five times more than in Pakistan, where it costs 19 US cents, Pagdanganan said. Another Pfizer brand, the painkiller Ponstan, is priced 14 times higher in the Philippines than in Pakistan.

Consumers, officials angry

Pfizer's case has angered officials and consumers in the Philippines, where a third of the population lives in poverty and where hypertension is a major killer.

Government data show multinational drug companies hold 70 percent of an estimated $1.9-billion Philippine pharmaceutical market.

Rep. Ferjenel Biron, in a speech in the House of Representatives, recently called for a boycott of all Pfizer products. He accused the company of "persecuting millions of Filipinos who simply could not afford to buy the said medicine and are left with no choice but just to die."

Pfizer said its actions upheld the importance of encouraging innovation by protecting the intellectual property of companies that discover and develop lifesaving drugs.

"This is simply a matter of protecting our patent for amlodipine besylate (Norvasc) through its expiration date of June 2007," Pfizer responded in a statement. "We are seeking legal assurance that there will be no importation of an unauthorized amlodipine besylate product for the duration of this patent term."

Pagdanganan called the Pfizer suit "a harassment case," and filed a countersuit.

"It's greed and arrogance," he said.

He said it takes more than a year to get BFAD's import approval and, by suing, Pfizer was effectively extending its patent. Every year's delay in the entry of the drug from Pakistan translates to $23 million in Pfizer sales of Norvasc, he said.

Pagdanganan said PITC had not sold a single amlodipine besylate product in the Philippines and has promised not to do so until Pfizer's patent expires. The only issue, he said, is whether importing samples of patented drugs for registration purposes constitutes patent rights infringement.

Loophole

The practice is allowed under the "Bolar Provision" of the World Trade Organization's trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights, known as TRIPS. But the provision is not spelled out in the Philippines' Intellectual Property Code.

TRIPS also allows countries to do "parallel importation" of a medicine, sold at a cheaper price in another country, even without the approval of the patent holder.

Philippine officials blamed the country's high drug prices on a pharmaceutical marketing and distribution cartel, the myth that cheaper generic drugs are less effective, a patent system skewed in favor of multinational companies and heavy dependence on imported raw materials.

"The system has been so co-opted, if not corrupted, by some of these companies that the people are not left with so much choice," said Pagdanganan, whose office aims to cut in half by 2010 prices of medicines commonly bought by the poor.

Amend law

Jim Nibungco, a stroke survivor and officer of the Stroke Survivors Support Foundation, said he has seen so many stroke survivors unable to buy needed medicines.

"Once they see the price of the medicines, they just close their eyes because they could not afford to buy them," he said.

The coalition for cheaper medicine supports a bill that would amend local patent laws to keep them in sync with WTO rules, including clearly allowing parallel importation of drugs.

The bill has been endorsed by a joint Senate committee for plenary approval.

The PITC said government will put up more "people's drug stores" selling cheaper medicines to provide competition to big pharmaceuticals. Price controls for off-patent medicines, and a cap to spending on pharmaceutical advertising, also are being considered.

Proponents of the bill said it has a good chance of being passed. A majority of the senators, including Senate President Franklin Drilon, have already signed the bill as co-sponsors.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit no 1498, series of 2006

To solon, passage of '06 national budget dim

By TJ Burgonio

SEN. SERGIO OSMEÑA III IS RESIGNED TO the non-enactment of the P1.053-trillion 2006 national budget in view of the unflinching position of the senators on a P64-billion cut.

Osmeña said yesterday that restarting the stalled bicameral conference talks on the budget during the congressional break would be easy, but forging an agreement to pave the way for its passage would be tough.

"The bicam can get started. All we do is sit across the table and smile at each other and that is already the bicam. But whether anything substantial can be accomplished, that's dim," he said in a press forum at the Senate.

"Let's just talk about the 2007 budget," he said.

No sign

Osmeña said that so far there had been no sign the senators would budge from their position to slice P26.3-billion in lump sum appropriations from the outlay's programmed funds and P37.7 billion from its unprogrammed funds.

"We can be diplomatic, continue to talk, but our concern is the Filipino people. We felt bad because we just wasted taxes by so much and here we are trying to cover it up for the House and Malacañang by restoring the cuts that we made," he said.

Pork barrel cuts

"So I cannot agree on this. We will have a reenacted budget," he said.

The cuts mainly involved "pork barrel" items and the senators saw no reason to change their position, Osmeña said.

"They want the entire P1.053 trillion. We will not allow that excess, which is too much pork, to be wasted, to go into private pockets and we cannot sanction that," he said.

Optimistic Villar

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr., head of the Senate bicameral panel, had earlier voiced optimism the bicameral talks on the budget could be restarted during the congressional break to pave the way for its approval next month.

He said he wouldn't mind if the long-delayed budget was passed when Congress opens its third regular session on July 24 and President Macapagal-Arroyo presents the 2007 budget.

Congress adjourned Thursday last week without enacting the 2006 budget after talks between senators and congressmen fell through over strong disagreement on the cuts made by the Senate.

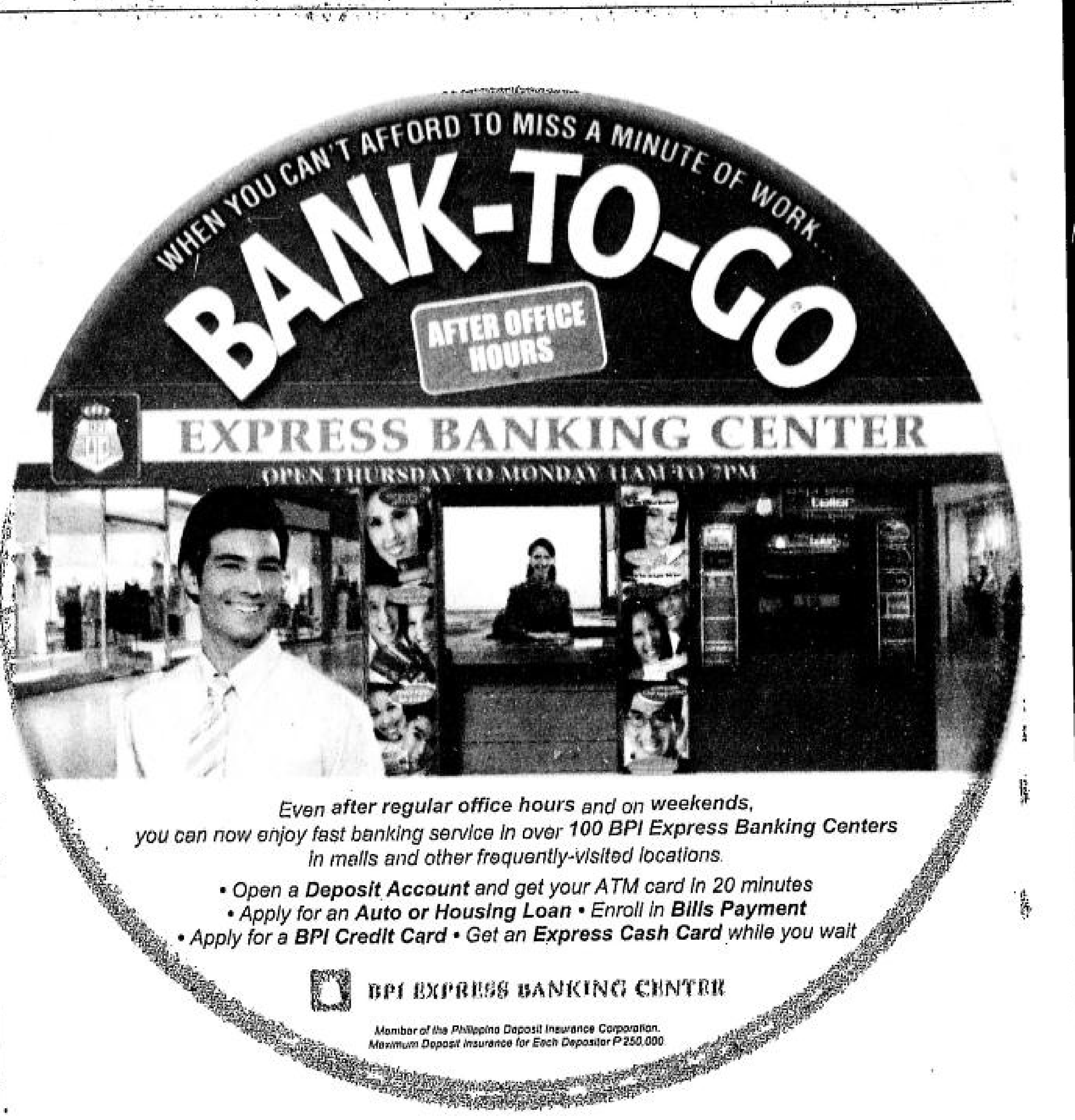
Palace threat

The senators tried to break the impasse by proposing to realign the P26.3 billion sliced from the programmed funds, but the House insisted that all the cuts be restored while Malacañang threatened to veto the cuts.

Osmeña said that operating on the 2005 P907.56-billion budget for the rest of the year would limit the government's spending authority, but would lead to a lower budget deficit and borrowings.

"We will save a lot of money; our credit rating will go up if we have that kind of savings," he said.

Echoing Villar, the senator said the Senate was considering providing a supplemental budget for education and health services should the 2005 budget be reenacted in the second half of the year.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Ex-colonel pins Guardians leader in coup d'etat trial

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ) YESterday presented a retired police colonel as it began its bid to pin down a former bank executive in planning and executing the July 27, 2003, takeover of the Oakwood Premier apartment-hotel in Makati City.

Leborio Jangao, identified as the founder and international chair of the Guardians International Inc. (GII), was put on the stand as the first prosecution witness in the coup d'etat-trial of Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. (PGBI) leader Ernesto Macahiya.

Jangao testified that Macahiya's group deliberately staged a rally near Oakwood on the day of the mutiny "to give moral support to the rebel soldiers."

Macahiya was one of seven people the DOJ had charged on Feb. 24 in connection with the 2003 mutiny. The accused included PGBI founder, former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, and five other identified leaders.

On direct examination, Jangao, known as the supreme head of the GII umbrella with 18 subordinate Guardians chapters, told the court yesterday that he received several text messages from past and present PGBI members on the eve of the failed mutiny warning him that the group was mobilizing its members to support a coup set to take place the next day.

Splinter group

He also portrayed the PGBI as a "splinter group" of the GII, having broken away from the federation for its contrary views on the government. The GII, an organization founded in the early 1980s, supported the administration.

"We wanted to show that this was planned, that it was not a coincidence. Because if it was, why would he [Jangao] be receiving text messages as early as the night before saying that a rally was going to push through the next day?" said Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Anthony Fadullon.

Jangao testified to receiving text messages on July 26, 2003, two of which read: "Tuloy ang rally bukas. Sent [by] Mao" and "Mabuhay ang PGBI, military junta." He said Mao was the codename of Macahiya, who admitted to such claim in an interview after the hearing.

He added that the planned mobilization by the anti-government PGBI prodded the GII to organize roughly 3,000 of its members to take part in a prayer rally at the Edsa Shrine on the day of the mutiny.

Asked why, Jangao said: "To clearly express our support to the government of President Macapagal-Arroyo and to oppose, denounce and disown the action of PGBI at Oakwood."

He said he also asked one of his subordinates to confirm the presence of PGBI at Oakwood and later verified Macahiya's participation in the mobilization.

Storm coincidental

In an interview after the hearing, Macahiya denied Jangao's claims, and said the PGBI's rally at Oakwood was coincidental, as the group was actually en route to Edsa Shrine at the time to take part in a rally against Ms Arroyo's upcoming State of the Nation Address.

He added that PGBI could not possibly be a "splinter group" from the GII, as the former was established earlier than the GII. He also characterized Jangao as shadowy, having been expelled from the PGBI in 2003.

"If our intent was to lend support to [the rebel soldiers], why would we bring our wives and children to that rally when we knew that we were facing violent confrontation and a coup no less? That's just against human nature," said Macahiya, currently detained at the Makati City Jail.

GMA, Cabinet to Isabela today

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO AND her Cabinet are scheduled to visit Cauayan, Isabela, today to begin a series of meetings with regional leaders and come up with "mega" development plans that may be included in her State of the Nation (SONA) address next month and the proposed 2007 national budget.

"The objective of the out-of-town meetings is to review and revitalize investment and development groupings from a supra-regional perspective," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters.

Four provinces

The President and her Cabinet will go to four provinces that represent the four "enlarged regional groupings" Malacañang is planning to turn into "investment and development areas."

These are North Luzon (which covers Regions 1,2 and the Cordillera Autonomous Region, plus Aurora and Nueva Ecija), Metro Luzon (Regions 3, 4A and Metro Manila), Central Philippines (Regions 4B, 5, 6, 7 and 8) and Mindanao (Regions 9 to 13 and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao)."

Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo said the consultations were aimed at achieving a more "closer partnership" between Malacañang and the local governments.

Sona vision

Saludo said that during the Cabinet meeting last week, the President raised the need to involve the regional development councils in formulating her Sona "vision."

"The Presidents idea is to move toward a larger grouping, larger areas that will be able to harness even greater economic potential and synergies, and complementation within these areas," he told reporters.

"With this larger areas, we hope to bring in more investment not only from the public sector but also from the private sector," Saludo said.

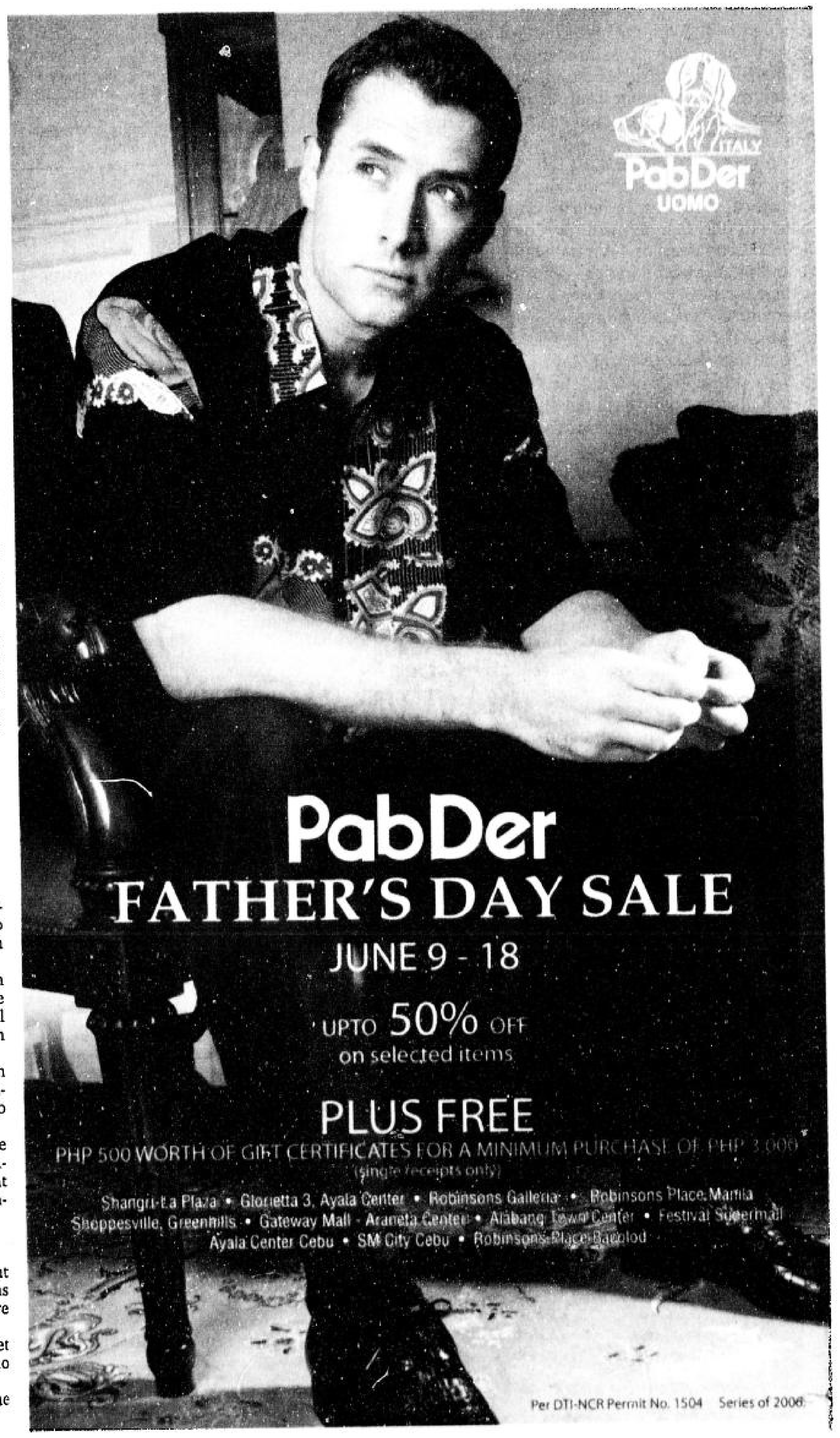
He said the Cabinet would review these megaplans and come up with priority initiatives "that will be then given to the President for inclusion in her Sona and for priority implementation."

Cabinet monitoring

The megaplans or "development blueprints" that will be drawn for these areas will be monitored by the Cabinet to ensure that these are implemented.

Saludo said the President and her Cabinet visit next week Metro Luzon and Mindanao before Ms Arroyo's trip to Europe.

Their trip to Central Philippines will come next in July, he said.



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1504 Series of 2006

ISSN 0116-2642
INQUIRER
Vol. 21 No. 188
Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

OPINION

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The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
•Subscription Hotline 896-6000
•100% soy ink•

The pain of contempt

EDITORIAL

OMBUDSMAN MERCEDITAS GUTIERREZ HAS A historic chance to contribute to the cause of election reform, by getting to the bottom of the anomalous Mega Pacific election automation deal. Instead, she has spent a lot of time doing essentially nothing about the case, until a March 28 resolution of the Supreme Court forced her to get serious. Since then, and especially after the Court reiterated its order in another resolution on May 3, she has spent a good amount of her precious time indulging in what is apparently a new legal principle: wounded pride.

She has repeatedly held before the Court that its directive had undermined the independence of her constitutionally mandated office, and that it could not be "directed" to do anything because it was "not a party to the case."

This position not only legally untenable, but a mockery of the true responsibilities of the Ombudsman. It is nothing more than institutional, or perhaps even personal, hubris, and we are glad that the Supreme Court has put Gutierrez in her place.

All this angst-filled huffing and puffing by one of the most powerful officials in government has obscured what is in fact at stake in the case: A grave anomaly was committed, by public officials and what the Court called "conspiring private individuals." It is the Ombudsman's duty, as the government's chief graftbuster, to find out how it was committed, and to prosecute those behind the anomaly. We believe the resolution of the Mega Pacific case will help our democratic project, by preparing the groundwork for yet another attempt at the long-overdue and most necessary automation of the election process. But we need not go that far; the prosecution and conviction of those liable will already go a long way in restoring public confidence in our public institutions.

Instead of seizing on the historic opportunity, however, Gutierrez has quarreled with the Supreme Court. She has taken issue with the Court's decision instructing her office to do what it was mandated to do in the first place. Like a French king, she has wondered aloud about the coming flood: "With the high court's directive, what will prevent lower courts from directing us?"

The more appropriate question, however, is: What prevented the Ombudsman from "acting promptly," as it is mandated by the Constitution, to investigate the P1.3-billion anomaly?

Consider this timeline. Last Feb. 14, the Ombudsman was ordered by the Supreme Court to "show cause why [her office] should not be held in contempt of court for its failure to fully comply with the Court's directive in the Jan. 13, 2004 Decision." A month later, on March 28, the Ombudsman was ordered "to report [to the Court] on a regular basis—once every three months—the steps it has taken and the corresponding results of those actions" in the Mega Pacific case.

Some five weeks later, on May 3, the Court was forced to issue yet another order: "The Office of the Ombudsman shall, under pain of contempt, report to this Court by June 30, 2006, its final determination of whether a probable cause exists against" those involved in the anomaly.

The other day, the Supreme Court denied with finality the Ombudsman's motion for reconsideration "for utter lack of merit." It noted that its directive to the Ombudsman did not "in any way impinge upon the [Ombudsman's] independence as provided under the Constitution." It belabored the obvious: "Nowhere in the questioned resolution did the Court demand that the Ombudsman decide or make a specific determination—one way or the other—of the culpability of any of the parties." It also described Gutierrez's "protestations of judicial interference" in unambiguous terms, calling it "strange and out of tune."

Unfortunately for the Ombudsman, who used to be the President's chief legal counsel and was a law school classmate of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, she labors under the impression that she still belongs to the Malacañang choir. She will continue to do so, because on the contentious Mega Pacific case, the Palace—unlike the Supreme Court, or the Senate, or even the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines—has always sung a different tune.

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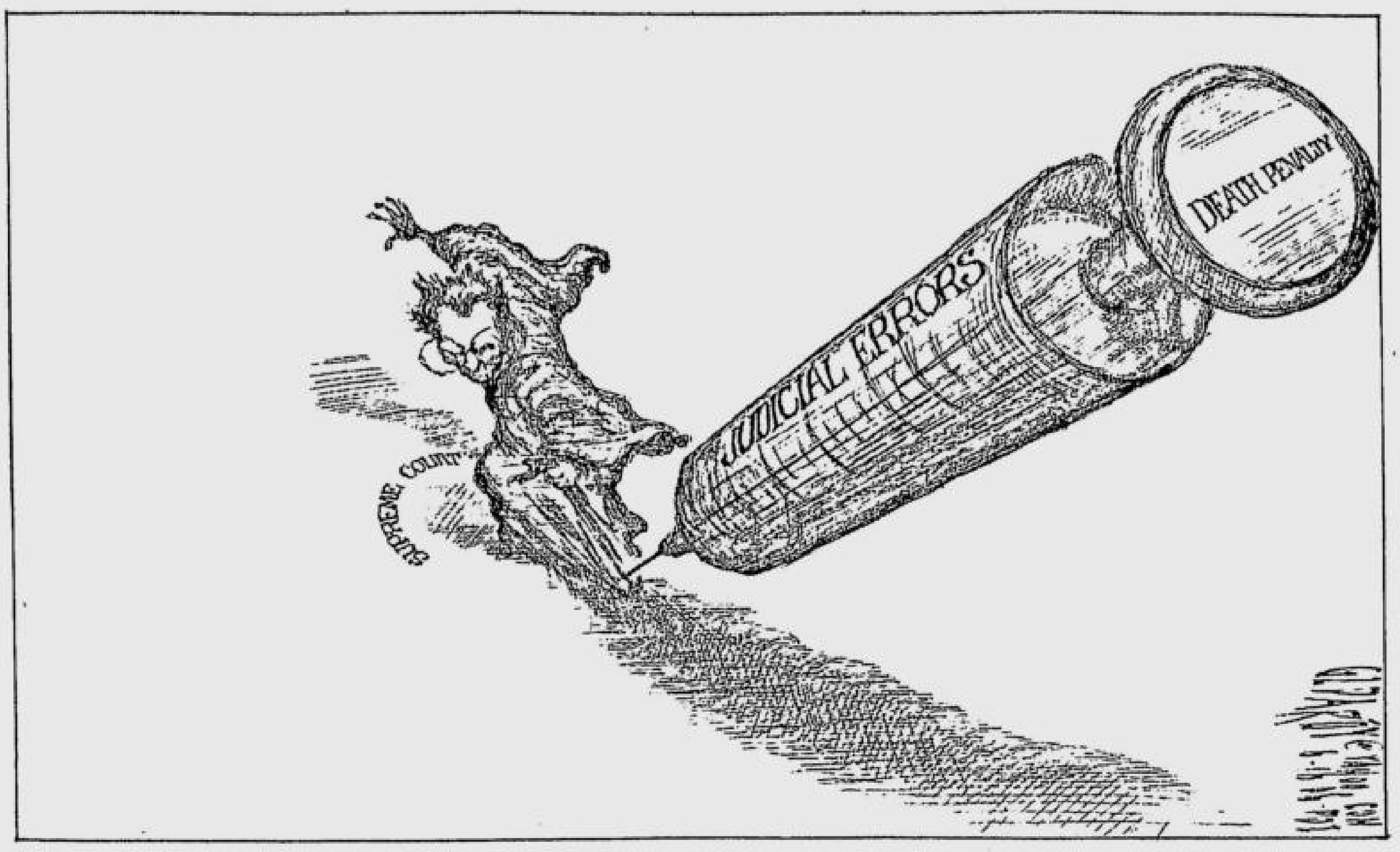

Why is somebody lusting for BIR top post?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT IS TRUE THAT THERE IS A PLOT TO UNSEAT Revenue Commissioner Jose Maria Bunag, but the reason is not that the BIR failed to achieve its collection target for April. That is only an excuse. The real reason could be that a Cabinet member wants to put his own protégé in the BIR.

Why? For billions of reasons.

It was not a Cabinet member, but Rep. Joey Salceda, President Macapagal-Arroyo's economic adviser, who asked for Bunag's head. Yes, but the Cabinet member is a former congressman himself, and you know the camaraderie in the House of Representatives. It is like the camaraderie among members of the Mafia.

And who is the protégé? He is a city treasurer. He had transferred to a big city from another city, where he was facing several lawsuits. The new mayor (does he know the treasurer's past?) likes him because he has been able to increase the city's tax collections.

But the treasurer's style is like that of the Sheriff of Nottingham. When a taxpayer fails to pay his real estate taxes, he immediately orders the seizure of his property and sells it at public auction. And here is the strange part: He does not give the taxpayer the mandatory one-year grace period to pay the tax. There is always a ready buyer who buys the property at rock-bottom prices. When the property owner protests and threatens a lawsuit, he tells the owner to reimburse the purchase price to the buyer. But the buyer demands a hefty interest on his money, which interest the owner is forced to pay. (The buyers, by the way, always manage to corner the choice properties at bargain prices during auctions.)

I know of at least two property owners who sued the treasurer for doing this. One did not even know that his house and lot where he and his family were living had been sold at public auction until it was too late. He also didn't know that he had tax arrears or that his property had been scheduled for auction. He never got a notification from City Hall. The notice was sent to the wrong address.

Imagine the family's surprise when the buyer showed up at the house to tell them they were the buyers of their abode and asked the family to leave as soon as possible. They went to a lawyer and threatened to sue for damages. The case was settled out of court. The owner paid back the buyer, with the interest alone running into hundreds of thousands of pesos. Not bad for a deposit of a few hundred thousand pesos.

What about damages for the anguish suffered by the owner who seemed to be the victim of a well-orchestrated scam? The owner was so happy to get back his property, although it cost him a lot of cash, that he didn't pursue the case anymore.

Some time after I wrote about this case in the INQUIRER, a couple approached me and said that they, too, had been victimized the same way and that they had a pending case against the treasurer. They gave me a folder of documents on their case. I still have it in my files, and I'll write about it when I find it. I also received a letter about the cases filed against him in another city but no documents.

* * *

I read the other day about school officials lamenting that there were not enough scholarships available to poor students. This is like one raindrop in an ocean, but the heirs of the late Sen. Blas F. Ople and Samahang Plaridel, the association of genuine journalists, are doing their bit to provide scholarships to deserving students. They have have just given scholarships to journalism and Mass Com freshmen students of the University of the Philippines, University of Sto. Tomas, Lyceum, Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) and the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila. The first scholars were presented to journalists at the Front Page last week. Initially, there are six scholars, but the number will increase by six every year (and possibly seven if Pamantasan ng Makati is included among the schools, or even more if there are more donors to the foundation) as this year's freshmen ascend to higher years.

Applicants are screened by the universities and must pass certain requirements, the most important of which is that they must be poor and must maintain a minimum rating at the end of every semester. The scholarship includes tuition, book allowance and a monthly stipend.

It is too late now for the present semester, but qualified students can apply for next semester at the university they want to enroll in, not at the Samahang Plaridel clubhouse.

I know there are many scholarships available for bright students, but I wish more individuals and companies will donate to scholarship foundations. There are so many students out there who need help. There are many bright students who, like flowers deprived of water and nourishment, cannot bloom because they cannot afford the cost of studying in today's schools.

I personally know the value of such scholarships. My own daughter finished her studies on various scholarships. She was a scholar at the Philippine Science High School, a Coseteng scholar at the University of the Philippines-Diliman where she finished her Biology course summa cum laude, and a university scholar at UP-Manila for her medicine course. My other daughter was also a scholar in Salzburg, Austria, and in Rome, while my son was a scholar at Sophia University in Japan.

Latin America's left turn: Will we follow?

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

SINCE 2000, LATIN AMERICAN ELECTORATES have brought leftist coalitions into power. Leftist presidents now preside over most of America's southern hemisphere. And the list is growing: Lula da Silva in Brazil, Lucio Gutiérrez in Ecuador, Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, Nestor Kirchner in Argentina, Michelle Bachelet in Chile, Tabare Vasquez in Uruguay.

Filipino conservatives will shudder at some of their credentials: Chile's Bachelet is the daughter of an air force general who opposed Pinochet and died in prison, and she herself worked undercover for the Socialist Youth, was tortured and detained. Ecuador's Gutierrez is an ex-colonel and former coup plotter. Interestingly enough for Pinoy doctors, Bachelet is a pediatrician and Uruguay's Tabare, an oncologist.

The cycle is all too familiar to Filipinos. A dark decade of dictatorship ends, followed by democratic politics and market-based economics. Then fed up with corruption, crony capitalism and economic programs that have not improved the lot of the common folk, one by one electorates turn away from established political parties, dismayed with the rigodon of elite factions taking their turn at the till. We Pinoys have actually invented a term for this alternating function of resident naysayers: "fiscalizers." "Away with them all!" is the cry rejecting the political class, in a continent with the most unequal distribution of wealth.

Jorge Castañeda, formerly Mexico's foreign minister, is the author of "Utopia Disarmed: The Latin American Left after the Cold War" and "Compañero: The Life and Death of Che Guevara." He recently wrote an essay in Foreign Affairs about "a tale of two Lefts"—the first having radical roots but open-minded and modern (which I will call the pragmatic Left) and the second stridently populist and committed to power rather than ideology (the populist Left).

We must embrace the first, Castañeda says, but not the second, and he detects signs of pragmatism in many of the elected leftists who have toned down their rhetoric, pledged to live within International Monetary Fund guidelines, and made their peace with big business.

Is a radical turn at all possible in the Philippines? Yes, our McCarthyist hangover notwithstanding. Disillusion with establishment politics is deep and cuts across social classes. How many out there honestly believe that life will improve simply by changing leaders or constitutions? Only the Left can offer, sincerely or not, any alternative vision, and it can find windows of opportunity in alliance politics, the old cadres' "united front."

Why is it not probable? One, the United States can tolerate recalcitrants in its own backyard, for as long as they do not incubate their own Saddam Husseins and Osama bin Ladens. But we have our own terrorist nurseries in Mindanao, and I doubt if the US will suffer discordant voices when at least one voice speaks Arabic.

Two, Castañeda's fine distinction between the pragmatic and the populist Left does not exist in the Philippines. Some leftists may sound pragmatic, especially when NGOs speak "technocratese" to their EU and USAID funders. After all, it is easy to reword activist slogans into innocuous rubrics. "Down with bureaucrat capitalism!" translates into a call for "Anti-Corruption, Public Accountability and Transparency." "Fight for peoples' rights!" translates into "Stakeholder Participation and Democracy." But the Latin strain persists in our populist intuitions.

Third, these leftists won in peaceful elections and on the back of Left-led coalitions. Ours is a record of tainted elections, a non-credible Comelec, and non-platform-based alliances. Filipino rightists have successfully adopted leftwing tactics of community organizing and "political ventriloquism," but I dread the day when Filipino leftists embrace the rightwing expertise in wheeling and dealing, backslapping and horse-trading.

Why is it not desirable? Populism caters to the most immediate and personal needs of the majority and fosters a culture of bottomless subsidies. That mindset blends so well with our feudal and Catholic values. It glorifies charity, which is good, but legitimizes passivity and dependency, which is not.

And why can it be desirable, at least on intrinsically political questions? Because populism does present one real virtue. Given the sentimental, touchy-feely, personalized game of our mass politics, populism reserves one final check on power, namely, the people's sense of when things have gone too far. Thus the untranslatable anti-Marcos slogan, "*Tama na! Sobra na! Alis na!*"

Sure the public is so handily manipulable. Witness GMA's finessed handling of the Garci tapes; she apologized for having spoken but did not admit to having been taped. You will recall Bill Clinton's famous denials: "I smoked but did not inhale" (he never used drugs) and "I never had sex with that woman" (Monica Lewinsky had sex with him, not him with her!). And by the way, both of them thwarted impeachment.

Sure the public's sense of justice can be deadened by history. Witness the lack of outrage over the decimation of Bayan Muna's regional leaders and the targeted killings of local journalists. But we witnessed that slow boil as well during the Marcos years, as the forgiving and fatalistic Pinoy waited patiently until Ninoy's death in August 1983. But boil over it did by 1986!

In this season of despair, there are those who seek nothing less than a politics with soul, and Latin America's Left turn teaches them it is no terrible heresy to find salvation outside establishment politics.

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

Make or break

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

PORTENTS ARE RIFE THAT THE COUNTRY IS heading toward a make-or-break showdown over constitutional reform during the next session of Congress which begins in July. Its outcome will decide two fundamental issues: whether President Macapagal-Arroyo will serve out her term till 2010 or the Senate will be abolished. Both the President and the Senate are aware of the life-and-death stakes in this showdown. No prisoners will be taken.

If the President succeeds in rewriting the Constitution to make a shift to the parliamentary system through a people's initiative, the Senate will go, and she gets to serve until 2020. It's going to be a winner-take-all contest.

The chronic impasse has to end. There's no middle ground here.

Both camps have begun to sharpen their weapons and are prepared to dig in. The President fired the opening salvo of this struggle in her Independence Day speech last Monday when she said, "Our people will soon be called upon to make a decision that can bring to an end to the political deadlocks that have stalled our efforts to take our nation to the next level (of development)." She added: "The choice is for us to make whether we continue to live up to the vision of our national heroes or continue to watch helplessly while our political system degenerates and our economy is trapped in the mire of uncertainty."

To make sure that her message was clearly understood, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita amplified that the President was referring to the people's initiative as a last resort to revise the Constitution, after Congress adjourned with the Senate and the House of Representatives deadlocked over the option of convening a constituent assembly to consider constitutional revision.

"Unless the impasse ... can be resolved," said the President's political adviser Gabriel Claudio, "I guess it would have to be a people's initiative." With a hint of a threat, Claudio said that House leaders and members who have been pushing the constituent assembly formula were saying they would "throw their support behind the people's initiative if the deadlock is not broken."

How the highly controversial people's initiative will come about remains a big problem. Its takeoff depends on nothing more solid than claims by the administration that Sigaw ng Bayan, a government sponsored organization, had already collected more than the required nine million signatures in support of a petition to the Commission on Elections to start the process of amending the Charter. How the campaign overcomes the formidable legal obstacle—a Supreme Court ruling that the people's initiative is illegal because it lacks an enabling legislation—is anybody's guess.

By making people's initiative the last throw of the dice, the administration is reworking the strategy that has allowed it to ride out urban-based political movements that have unsuccessfully tried to oust the President through street protests or through impeachment by Congress. The strategy is built on the support of the President's rural constituency mobilized by local officials and of the Lakas coalition, her political machine in the 2004 election, which gave her a majority in the House that quashed the impeachment complaint last year.

The urgency of the people's initiative is underscored by the fact that Cha-cha has to be jump-started this year or else it's a dead horse. Next year will see the holding of mid-term elections whose result could change the balance of power in Congress and affect the Lakas majority in the House.

The President is bracing for the showdown on Cha-cha in Congress armed with the belief that she has the troops that has enabled her to win the numbers game. She wore down the protests sparked by the Garcillano tapes and blunted a resignation of half of her Cabinet in July last year, aimed at precipitating a collapse of the regime.

Those showdowns demonstrated that the President's opponents cannot muster the numbers to oust her and this has led her to adopt the strategy of trying to win the battle over Cha-cha by rallying her rural constituency, which has not made common cause with the urban-based constituency of protest.

The regime has survived not because it has broad popular support but because of the inability of her opponents to mobilize sufficient numbers out in the streets to call for withdrawal of support from the government by other sectors, including the military, the business community and the middle class. She is playing on this weakness. Her opponents have not argued their case for her ouster persuasively enough to bring more people to their side and out to the streets where it matters. They have to do more than shout angry rhetoric and self-righteous political moralizing to bring down a government. The ordinary people do think. They listen to reason more than to hysterical rabble-rousing, and, as we have seen, they make decisions (like staying at home) that disappoint others.

Ahead of this looming showdown, a paradox that is very hard to explain confronts the Filipino people. All the opinion surveys show that the regime is extremely unpopular. But in the series of showdowns of the past year, the President continued to have the numbers to counter the acoustical barrage.

This latest test of strength between the President and the forces arrayed against her will be fought on another people power front and in another form: a people's initiative, which is a distortion of Edsa.

Media decoys

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THERE WAS A STORY IN YESTERDAY'S INQUIRER about a "three-layer shield" of 14 women of the same height and build as "Nicole," the 22-year-old native of Zamboanga who is accusing four US servicemen of raping her last November.

The look-alikes act as decoys to divert media attention during Nicole's appearances in court. They are also around to protect Nicole from media exposure since she refuses to be identified ("Nicole" is not her real name). Regardless of how the trial turns out, after all, she has the rest of her life to live and anonymity is her best assurance of a "normal" life after all this has passed.

I read the news item with ambivalent feelings. As a woman and a feminist, I could very well understand how Nicole must feel, and the motivations of the women in her support group. But as a member of media, I could understand the needs of the photographers and camera operators, as well as the motivations of the editors who sent them on assignment. I was also a little bit ashamed of what these motivations were, knowing that the first paper to run a front-page photo of "Nicole," or the first TV newscast to air her face could rightfully brag of bagging a scoop.

Why this could be considered a "scoop" seems obvious. People are naturally curious about this young woman who has become the eye of a diplomatic, political and social storm that swirls about not just an alleged crime, but also around issues like foreign military intervention (or support), geo-political alliances and gender and human rights.

But should media abet—and seek to satisfy—the public curiosity about how Nicole looks? What public interest would be served by violating her privacy? Would it enable strangers to better judge the truth of her claims?

* * *

DURING the deliberations on the progressive anti-rape bill, I wrote about a provision in the draft legislation that would make it a crime to publicly disclose the identity of a rape survivor without her/his consent. I said that such a provision would only compel the media to stop covering cases of rape and other incidents of abuse, even as the need to raise public awareness about such crimes remains. It would be better, instead, for women's and victims' rights groups to work with media organizations on the formulation of guidelines that the media could voluntarily adopt in the course of their coverage of rape cases.

I still believe we cannot and should not legislate media behavior, or the scope of media coverage, be it of a rape trial or of presidential activities. But nothing prevents media organizations themselves from formulating reasonable guidelines on their behavior and enforcing them among their employees. We are, after all, human beings first before we are journalists.

In the 1980s, a woman who was jogging in Central Park in New York was set upon by a gang of youths who were on a "wilding" spree. She filed charges of rape and assault against the teenagers and the ensuing trial was one of the more sensational stories in the United States that year.

But her identity was never revealed. Her family appealed to all the media entities covering the investigation and the trial not to reveal her name or carry her picture and, to their credit, all of them, including New York's rowdier tabloids, acceded to the family's request. From the start, the media only identified her as the "Central Park jogger."

Can Philippine media exercise the same level of restraint and consideration?

* * *

THE SUPREME Court seems to be losing patience with the Office of the Ombudsman, "castigating" it for failing to act upon an order, first issued two years ago, to investigate whether probable cause exists for the filing of charges against Commission on Elections officials for a fraudulent computerization program.

Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez has protested that her office has begun investigating the deal, which involved P1.3 billion of public money spent on a poll computerization program which never got off the ground. But it's a mystery why it has taken her office so long to release its recommendations when the basic facts and findings had been settled by the Supreme Court itself.

In its order rebuking the Ombudsman, the Court said the Ombudsman "does not refute" the claim that the anti-graft body "practically sat on" the complaint. Instead, the Ombudsman insists on its "independence" from the Supreme Court and says it need not be "compelled" into any sort of action.

But the Ombudsman need only study the 2004 Supreme Court decision to determine who among the Comelec officials and suppliers are culpable and should be charged.

* * *

IF YOU will recall, the Supreme Court in 2004 ruled that the Comelec disregarded the law and its own bidding rules when it awarded the contract for the automated counting and canvassing of ballots to the Mega Pacific consortium, which did not have enough capitalization for the project.

The Court then ordered the Ombudsman to determine who among the public officials and private individuals, if any, were culpable and what charges should be filed against them.

Instead of acting with dispatch on the order, two Ombudsmen—Gutierrez and her predecessor, Simeon Marcelo—seemed to merely dribble the ball, with Gutierrez filing a rebuttal to an earlier reminder from the Supreme Court asserting her office's independent character.

The Ombudsman has until June 30 to respond to the Supreme Court's prodding. But the issue could be resolved even sooner—and that's if the Comelec officials involved voluntarily resign and leave the door open for the creation of a new Comelec leadership.

But this, of course, is just wishful thinking.

'Mamon' or 'magdalena'

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ONCE UPON A TIME, IN A LAND FAR AWAY called Madrid, I found myself looking at the wide array of bread and pastries displayed in a *pastelería* on the chic Paseo de la Castellana. It was *merienda* time, I was hungry and didn't want to gamble on some elaborate cake or pastry only to be disappointed by its unfamiliar taste. Thus, I settled for something I knew, a small fluffy cupcake we have in the Philippines. When I asked how much the *mamon* cost, I was nearly thrown out of the bakery. The lady of advanced age at the other side of the counter, glared when she heard "*mamon*" and proceeded to ignore me. I asked a second and third time, and then with her arms in the air she said that I had just spoken an unmentionable word. I apologized and explained that in the Philippines, this cake was known as *mamon*, to which she replied that in Madrid our *mamon* was known as *magdalenas*.

I was to discover later that in French, the same cupcake was called a *madeleine*. It was immortalized in Marcel Proust's "Remembrance of Things Past," a rather lengthy novel about a man eating cake, eating *madeleine*. Surely the *magdalena* was a culinary immigrant to the Philippines, so why did we change its name to *mamon*, a vulgar Spanish term for breasts?

"The Da Vinci Code" buffs can follow this thread and explore the way Mary Magdalene is venerated in certain churches and towns around the country. There is a beautiful Spanish colonial church in a Laguna town called Magdalena that is famous for giving shelter to a wounded Emilio Jacinto during the Revolution. There is a marker where he rested, and it is believed that the red stains on the tile floor are traces of his blood.

In historic Kawit, Cavite, Mary Magdalene is venerated in the town church, hence Emilio Aguinaldo's fighting name, the name of his Katipunan faction is Magdalo, a name made notorious in our time by the Oakwood mutineers

Is there some connection between Mary Magdalene, the Templars, the Masons, and the Philippine Revolution? Now, that I leave to your imagination.

Let us return to the *magdalena/mamon* and remember that the patron saint of bakers is not Mary Magdalene but St. Agatha whose martyrdom was preceded by cruel and unusual punishment: her breasts were cut off. Hence, this venerated Virgin and Martyr is depicted in art holding her breasts on a plate. Artists over time were very clumsy and people forgot the story and presumed she was holding bread on a platter. So St. Agatha is the patroness of bakers and bell-makers.

Magdalena/mamon does not resemble anything anatomical, but the *monay*, also known as *putok*, really looks so obscene it is surprising that the MTRCB has not given it an "X" rating on bakery shelves.

A trip to any neighborhood bakery will reveal that we make more than the staple *pan de sal*. There is a wide variety of bread that is worth three columns, but I want to digress even further and mention a trip to the north of Cebu in the company of Annette V. Osmeña.

We stopped in the original branch of Titay's to use the bathroom and grab some *chichiria*. I was surprised that there was a man who played an old-style harp by the door. The instrument was Filipino, and I hoped he would be playing traditional Cebuano tunes but he was busy with the theme from the movie "The Godfather."

For many people in Manila and throughout the country, Titay's is synonymous with *rosquillos*. These round, rose-like cookies with holes in the center look more like a baby teether today and seem to be the only product from this famous bakery founded in 1907. Yet the bakery was filled with all types of goodies, ranging from the familiar *pan de sal, pan de leche, otap* and *monay* to the unfamiliar *caycay, sinadlan, penato, galletas del carmen, galletas bato, masareal, tasaktak,* and a rather full and hard bread called *elorde*, after the boxer Gabriel "Flash" Elorde who happens to be a famous son of Cebu. This bread, which needs to be chewed quite well, is said to resemble Elorde's fists both in look and quality. It is not to my liking.

We bought all of these products from Titay's, and from what I remember the *galletas del carmen* are flower-like cookies that supposedly originated from the town of Carmen. The *rosquillos* come in the usual light color or in brown, and there is one type labeled "extra special" (whatever that means). The *hojaldres* come in the usual sizes—small, medium and large—but they also had a "jumbo" and "tiny" size.

My favorite is the *sinudlan*, also known as *baobao*. It is shaped like a turtle and made with brown sugar stuffed with *bocayo* inside. It took quite a while for me to place the taste of the crunchy outer cover, but when I could finally place it, it was similar to the American fortune cookies given out at the end of Chinese meals.

History and culture are not confined to textbooks, libraries and archives. There is a lot of both waiting to be discovered anew in our markets and bakeries (Panaderia de Molo in Iloilo is just as rich in a history and variety). One just has to be observant because when we deal with the everyday matters, we usually see but fail to notice a lot of things.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Zsa Zsa vs MMDA

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

ZSA ZSA ZATURNAH THAT IS, AND FOR THOSE WHO ARE still caught in a 20th century time-warp, Zsa Zsa's the amazing comic book character created by Carlo Vergara, the popular strip converted into a box-office hit of a play and now about to become a film which I am certain will be a blockbuster.

Zsa Zsa starts out as a homely beautician who, by swallowing a magic stone, is transformed into a kind of combination Darna and Eula Valdez, indomitable and sultry, who fights all kinds of evil scum of the earth.

Now, what does Zsa Zsa have to do with the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA)?

Well, you see, since we're on the topic of evil, have you noticed how Metro Manila has been under siege lately from hordes of highway robbers—in MMDA uniforms?

Over the summer, the MMDA began to field large numbers of traffic aides and at that time, I thought, oh, just in time to help decongest the traffic, which had turned from bad to horrendously bad after they lifted the numbers-coding scheme. But lo and behold, the traffic worsened and, no wonder, it looks like the traffic aides have been too busy extorting money from motorists.

To show how bad the situation is, twice in a month, I was nearly victimized, both times along Ortigas Avenue, in a kind of godforsaken Bermuda Triangle between the Greenmeadows Avenue and Medical City populated by droves of MMDA ghouls waiting for prey.

That area isn't their only haunt. I have friends reporting similar colonies of these scoundrels in other parts of the city, usually when it's close to *merienda* or meal time.

Wimp

Before going on, let me explain that I am the most scrupulous person when it comes to observing traffic rules. I use my seat belts. I stop at all red signals, even if it's 2 a.m. and there aren't any other cars coming in any direction. In other words, I'm a law-abiding wimp when I'm behind the wheel, and even when I'm not. My friends will attest to that because they get an earful from me when they're driving: "Seat belts," "Slow down, yellow ahead," "Stop, red light," "Careful, there's a dog," "Wait, there's a frog crossing." (Okay, okay, so that last one was just to keep you reading.)

Now with that explanation, let me narrate my encounters with the MMDA's low life—and with Zsa Zsa. I'm writing about the incidents partly in the hope of getting the attention of MMDA officials but, having little faith in the authorities, also hoping that you as motorists might be able to arm yourselves against these road bandits.

The first incident occurred about a month ago. I had driven past the intersection of Rodriguez-Lanuza Avenue and Ortigas just as the traffic light changed from green to yellow. Mind you, green to yellow, not yellow to red, which would still have been fine. An aide came strutting forward and tried to flag me down. I glared at him and drove on, but that incident irritated me. I noticed there were quite a few of them hanging around, so I knew there was something insidious going on in that area.

Last week's incident was more serious. This time, I was in my friend Jepoy's car and he was driving. After years of my backseat driving, he's learned to follow most of the rules, at least when I'm around. That day, he stopped dutifully on a red light, then turned right on a green. Guess what? It was like we'd driven into hell, with Lucifer's minions descending upon us. This time there was no escape. They had formed a gauntlet and forced two or three cars to the curb, with each car taken over by one aide.

Magic stone

The face of corruption can be so deceptive. Our aide was courteous but went straight to the point, claiming we had turned right on a red signal.

Hulidap, I thought, a hold-up in the guise of *huli* (apprehension). I kept calm but was firm about maintaining that we had not turned on a red signal, and asked if there was proof we did. Of course, the aide didn't have any, and he kept muttering that they didn't apprehend people unless they'd violated a rule.

I stood my ground, and then shifted the argument: even if the traffic light was red, which wasn't the case, we had every right to turn unless there was a sign that said "No right turn on a red signal." He insisted there was such a sign. "Oh?" I asked, "I drive through nearly every day of the week and I've never seen it." I wanted to go back with the aide so he could show me the sign, but the fateful intersection was about 100 meters back.

I marveled at the amazing vision these devils had to be able to spot erring motorists from such a distance. It was clear they were corrupt to the core, and that I had to shift tactics.

No, I didn't invoke some politician's name, or flash a general's calling card. I swallowed my magic stone. And voila, this wimp metamorphosed into Zsa Zsa minus the sexy outfit. I smiled and told the aide to go ahead and issue a ticket, and as Jepoy squirmed in his seat, I looked at the aide straight in his eye and then at his name patch. Then I whipped out paper and pen, declaring that I needed his identification card so I could get his complete name and address.

The aide paused, clearly caught off guard, then resumed his mantra about not apprehending people who had not violated the law. I assured him I understood what he was saying and that there was no problem since I was ready to meet him in court, but I wanted to make sure he would be there as well so could he please give me his ID and do it fast because I had an appointment to catch.

There was a brief stalemate. Then he waved us on, still insisting he never flagged people down unless they had violated the law.

The next day, I went back to the intersection. There was no sign barring a right turn on a red light. But let me emphasize again, we turned on a green light. This was pure extortion.

I'm not naming the aide. The jerk probably has three or four families to feed and really, he's just another cog in a corrupt system. But the MMDA better get its act together. Other people are noticing the rising incidence of *hulidap* from among these aides—on and off the road. One official in an international business association complained to me the other day that aides had approached him, offering to "adjust" the wired MMDA fences near his office so his car could pass through—for a fee of course.

He doesn't want to be named, which tells us about where we are today: at the mercy of mere aides turned terrorists, acting with impunity. Pay up and you encourage the thugs to go on victimizing other motorists.

If one of these hoodlums accosts you and you are certain you're right, do what I did and ask for their ID. I know there's a risk here that they would issue a ticket, which could mean additional hassles, so you'll have to assess whether you can afford that. You could think of other ways to argue your way through, maybe threaten to report them to INQUIRER's Ramon Tulfo. (Don't drop my name. Goodness, those illiterates don't, can't, read my column.)

As for the magic stone, I was joking. But then again, maybe there's a bit of Zsa Zsa in all of us.

Football suits Filipinos better than basketball

LET ME CLARIFY TWO POINTS IN AMANDO Doronila's wonderful commentary on football. ("Soccer is the sport of the underdog," PDI, 6/12/06)

Firstly, there is a third Asian country currently playing in the World Cup and that is Iran. In fact, Iran has more players playing in major European leagues than Korea and Japan.

The other point is whether football is still a sport of the underdog—as economic power and physical height are said to be of little hindrance, or not at all, in winning "the beautiful game." While the assertions serve to encourage Filipinos to embrace the game more than basketball, football's worldwide trend speaks differently.

Japan and South Korea are easily the two richest countries in Asia; and Iran, with its abundant supply of oil, is even in the path of developing its own nuclear capabilities.

Small African nations managed to qualify for the World Cup precisely because there is not much difference in the physical attributes of their peoples and the economic conditions of their countries. The difference is determined largely by certain African players who play in various European leagues. The same goes for the Latin American countries, like Brazil or Argentina.

What they lack in resources they make up with their physique, particularly in height! Take the case of Ecuador which scored a 2-0 upset over Poland, owing to the superb performance of three tall men—goalkeeper Mora, a six-footer; striker Delgado, 6' 2"; and team captain Hurtado, another six-footer.

Most of the European powerhouses include giants for strikers or forwards who give them scoring advantage during corners or free kicks. The mighty Czechs, one of the top favorites, have 6' 7" Koller who scored a goal before getting injured in the 3-0 routing of the United States squad. England has its 6' 6" Crouch; Italy its 6' 4" Toni; Netherlands its super 6'3" forward Nistelrooy; and Serbia-Montenegro its 6'7" giant Zigic. Brazil's top two strikers, Ronaldo and Adriano stand at 6' 1" and 6' 3," respectively. Even South Korea's striker Park Chu Young is a hefty six-footer.

Japan may not have tall scorers but it has two reserve goalkeepers who both stand at 6" 1."

And almost every squad in the World Cup has six-footers in charge of blocking the shots of opponents. The more famous of these giant keepers are: Vander Saar (6' 5"), Lehmann (6' 3"), Cech (6' 5"), Robinson (6' 4"), Dida (6' 5") and Buffon (6' 3"). Spain's Casillas at flat six feet is already considered by many as a short guard at the posts.

But despite this trend, football still fits the Filipino physique far better than basketball does. We still stand to perform better in this international game and can produce our own Pele or Nakata.

—Benjie Pineda (Father)
and Gabriel Pineda (Son),
Ayala Alabang Football-Futsal Club,
302 Dingalan St., Ayala Alabang Village,
Muntinglupa City

Political cleansing back is back

WITH ISSUANCE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1081 by Marcos in 1972, the era of fascism in the Philippines began. Political dissenters, student activists, labor militants, peasants and suspected communist were arrested, imprisoned or killed.

More than three decades later, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed PP 1017, and a new form of fascism visited the land. From 2001 to 2006, there have been more than 200 extra-judicial killings of political activists, not to mention the dozens of journalists murdered.

The Arroyo administration has denied involvement. The Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police have feigned innocence. But the recent abduction, detention and torture of the so-called "Erap 5" showed the hands of the military in the operation.

Not too long ago, when the Iron Curtain fell, the Federation of Yugoslavia broke up, and the world was shocked by the extent of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and Serbia. Perpetrators of these human rights violations were arrested and tried before the international court of justice in The Hague.

Around the same time, a far larger drama was being witnessed in Rwanda. About a million of Tutsi tribe members were massacred by the dominant Hutus. An international tribunal had to be set up in nearby Tanzania to try those accused of genocide.

We should not forget the 80 million Chinese people killed under the current Chinese political system, surpassing the combined casualties of World Wars I and II, or the Khmer Rouge and its killing fields that saw people being murdered just for wearing eyeglasses.

Of course, history tells us of the diaspora of the Jews. Now we are appalled by the Israeli military decimating Palestinians with impunity. A State of Palestine might no longer be feasible in the future for lack of one element: people.

We are also familiar with the tragedy in Afghanistan, where an internationally sanctioned invasion opened the gates of Guantanamo prison to deny hundreds of al-Qaida suspects of trial, justice—and even light and air.

In Iraq, in defiance of the United Nations, a US-UK-led coalition would have to answer judgment of history for around 50 people killed daily.

We still call the Philippines a republic and a democracy. But instead of tolerating political dissent and diversity, the Arroyo administration stands accused by the Commission of Human Rights and Amnesty International of being behind the "pattern of executions with impunity," which is not unlike the "salvaging" of the *desaparecidos* of Latin America.

Not so long ago, the military leaked a list of "enemies of the state"—composed of militants, lawmakers, students, peasants, even men of the Church. Now it has the oxymoronic Oplan Bantay Laya, allegedly implemented by bemedalled generals accused of human rights abuses.

Despite the repeal of the anti-subversion law, political cleansing is in earnest. We can only hope that the present administration recover its moral moorings soonest.

—NELSON D. LAVINA,
ambassador (Ret.), nlavina@lycos.com

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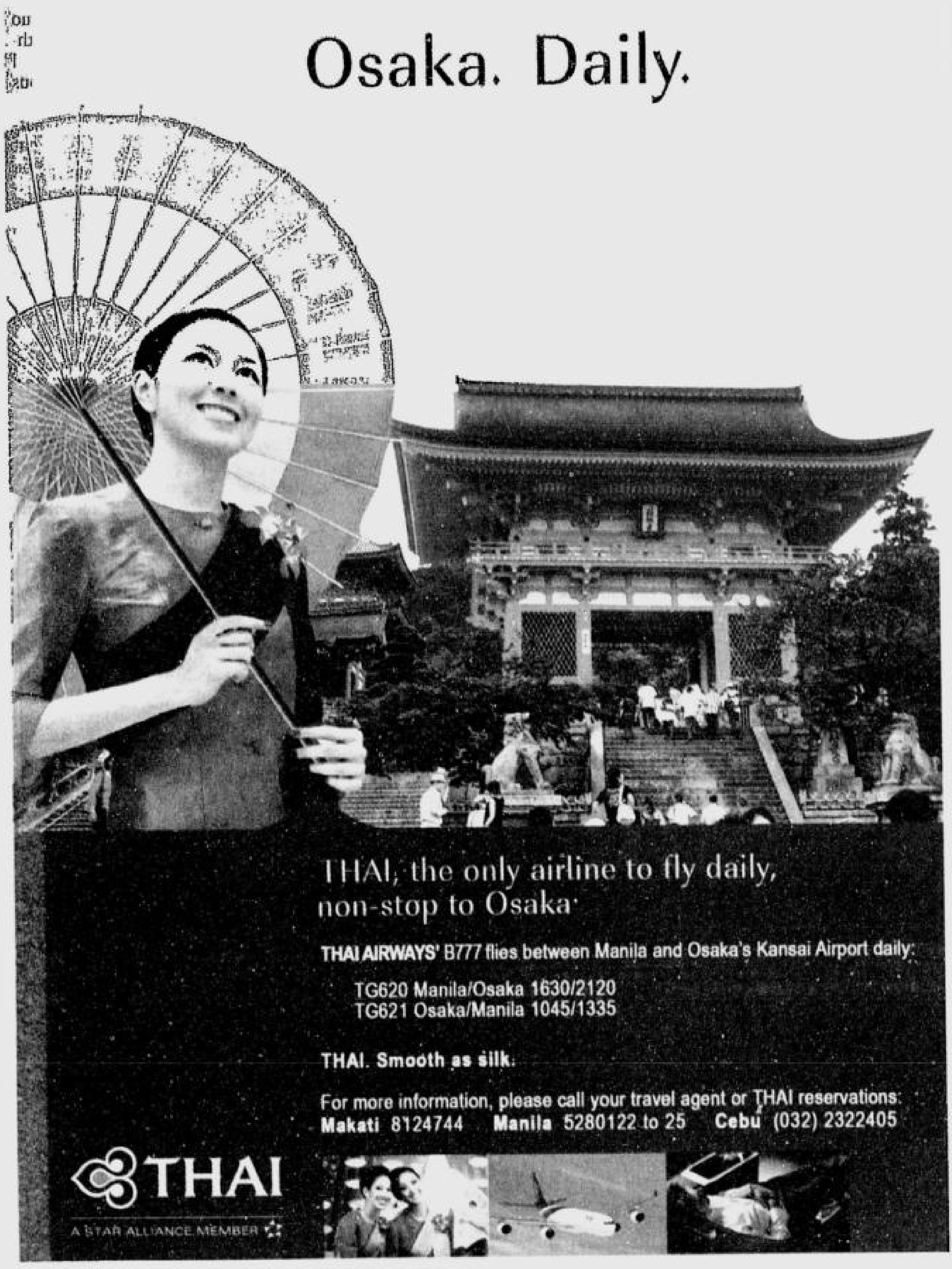
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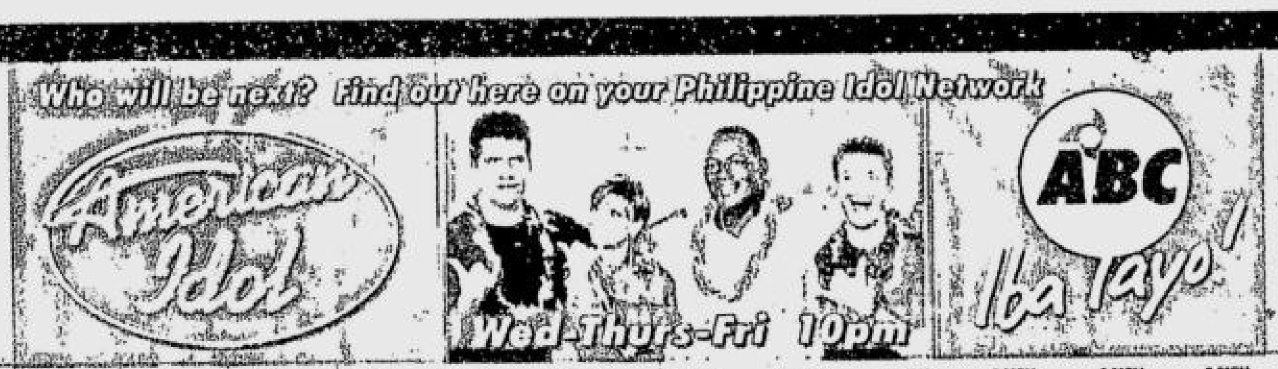
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Friday, June 16, 2006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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				National Geographic	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	[illegible] Primer		Real Stories	
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Calla Lily	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bituing Walang Ningning	Sa Piling Mo	My Girl	Wonderful Life	Gudtym			Insider
AXN		Blue Streak				Fear Factor (Season V)		Beastmaster (Season I)		Andromeda (Season V)		Ultimate Guinness World Records	E Buzz	Gatfight					Infested
Cartoon Network	Police Academy	Richie Rich	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi	Codename Kids Next Door [illegible] Double Episodes	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons - Double Episodes		Power Rangers Ninja Storm	PokeMon	[illegible]	Gundam Seed Destiny	The Simpsons		Mucha Lucha!	Duck Dodgers	Justice League	Samurai Jack
Cinema One		Sana Bukas Pa Ang Kahapon				Oh My Mama				Eto Na Naman Ako				Minsan Pa Kahit Konting Pagtingin 2				Ayos Lang Pare Ko	
Cinemax		The Appaloosa			Triggerman (4:35 PM)			The Italian Job (6:10 PM)				Sunset			Torque (9:45 PM)			Blind Side (11:10PM)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Surface		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Crime Scene Academy	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Crossing Jordan	
Discovery Channel	Connect	Extreme Engineering		Ancient Egyptians		How Do They Do It		Stay Alive		Rides		American Chopper		How Do They Do It		Psychic Witness		Crime Night	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible]	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Brandy & Mr. Whiskers	America's Funniest Home Videos	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN						2006 NBA Finals: Dallas vs Miami					Sportscenter Germany	Germany Tonight	NBA Access w/ Ahmad Rashad	U.S. Open Golf Championship		Sportscenter Asia	U.S. Open Golf Championship		
ETC		Veronica Mars 2		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Joan Of Arcadia 2		American Dreams 3		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Trading Spouses		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	The Good Code: The Natural Law	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	The Donut Man	Angel Force	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Backstage	The Gospel Of Life In Health	Defending Life	Life on The Rock Encore		Daily Mass Live		Holy Land Rosary Angelus	Parable	EWTN Bookmark	St. Thomas Aquinas In Today's World	Fr. John Corapi	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man (2:45 PM)	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Endless Love 1: Autumn In My Heart By Popular Demand		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Gokusen	24 Oras		Captain Barbell	Majika	I Luv NY	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Jewel In The Palace		Bubble Gang			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		Mcleod's Daughters V		Ratz (4:05 PM)				Bewitched	The Nanny	Judging Amy		Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye III		Hustle		Shadow Lake			Hustle (11:45PM)
HBO		The [illegible] (3:15 PM)				Private Benjamin (5:15 PM)				Ocean's Twelve				[illegible]			The Postman (10:45PM)		
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Combattler V	Gundam Seed	Iron Man 28	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mama da Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Gundam Seed
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	TV Infomercial		Japan Video Topics: Aims		ME TV		Bikini Frenzy			IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Jack In The Box				Megas XLR	Beat The Geeks	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Always Sunny In Philadelphia	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Premium Blend	Reno 911	Insomniac With Dave Attell
Lifestyle Network	[illegible]	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	Decorating Cents	Food Network Special		Boy Meets Grill	Intimate Portrait		Behind The Velvet Ropes	Martha		Simply Wine With Andrea Immer	The Great Adventure	Iron Chef America	
MTV Philippines		Boiling Points		Flashmob: Pink in New York City	MTV Hits (with SMS)					Get Spooked	MTV Hits	MTV News	MTV Hits	MTV Dyos		Boiling Points		VH1's All Access: More Celebrity Pets Unleashed	
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXLOG	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Club MYX	MYX Versions	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXLOG
National Geographic	Wildlife Diary	Nat'l Geographic Special				Built for the Kill: Snakes		Top 5 - Planet Football		WOW! Africa's Secret Seven		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Special		Violent Earth: Tornado		Zhang ZiYi, [illegible]	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Asia			Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ [illegible]		PCFA [illegible]		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay CCTV With Susan K	
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants [illegible]	My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up! [illegible]	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Avatar: The Legend Of Aang	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly OddParents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			[illegible]				[illegible]				Abracadabra				Buko Pandan				[illegible]
Qtv	[illegible]		[illegible]	Kaleido Star	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Magic Ring	Irene	Noel	Project 11	Ganda Ng Lola		News On Q	Love Life		Irene	Over The Green Fields
RPN 9						Global Window	RPN Arangkada Balita	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider							Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping		Sony Music Video		Oras Ng Himala		[illegible]		Shepherd's Voice		SBN Music Video	
Solar Sports					Volleyball 2006 Montreux Volley Masters				NBA Jam	[illegible]	2006 NBA Finals [illegible]						Solar Sports Desk	[illegible]	
Sports Plus				FIFA World Cup '06 Ecuador Vs Costa Rica						Raceworld		Nopi Tunervision	Rookie Manual	BD California	Wild Side	Golf Today	Inside the PGA	Barclays Classic Highlights	
Star Movies			12 Dogs Of Christmas				The Tailor Of Panama				Cheaper By The Dozen (7:20 PM)			The Lizzie McGuire Movie			Crash (10:35PM)		
Star World	Arrested Development	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Ed		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	TNA Wrestling		[illegible]		NYPD Blue		Seinfeld	Walker Texas Ranger
Studio 23	Bewitched	Naruto				Dance Idol	Teen Titans	The Batman	Justice League Unlimited	Wazzup Wazzup	Barkada Nights			[illegible] (9:10 PM)		News Central	Oprah		Family World

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Bomb scare alters court schedule in Baguio City

LIFE in Baguio courts was disrupted by a bomb threat that sent policemen, like this officer with his bomb sniffing dog, checking every nook and cranny of Baguio's court offices. VINCENT CABREZA/PDI NORTHERN LUZON

BAGUIO CITY—TWO BOMB THREATS MADE IN succession on Thursday stopped the scheduled hearings in this city's courts.

A man, claiming to be a "kawal (soldier)," made the threats, police said.

But some judges said they believed the threats were linked to an order that the Supreme Court was scheduled to issue that would penalize some Baguio judges over moral and legal infractions.

Police also said two courts on Thursday were scheduled to deliberate on a complaint filed against barangay officials for holding bingo games to raise community funds.

The city government claimed that the bingo operations were intended to camouflage jueteng operations in these villages.

Employees of the office of the Baguio prosecutor received the first threat at 8:30 a.m., alerting them to an explosive device that was scheduled to detonate between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Police explosives experts combed the justice hall but found no explosive. A second call was made at about 10 a.m., repeating the threat after employees were allowed to resume work.

Judge Ruben Ayson, of the regional trial court here, said he took the threat seriously because of last week's blasts in Metro Manila and Batangas.

Two other judges, Fernando Vil Pamintuan and Amado Caguioa, proceeded with their court schedules while employees left the hall.

Some court employees told the INQUIRER they were convinced that the threats were timed to coincide with the anticipated Supreme Court suspension of three Baguio judges and the dismissal of another judge whom Ayson had accused of immorality, fraud and various other forms of misconduct.

Text messages began circulating on Wednesday, saying that some Baguio judges were to be reprimanded for their public dispute. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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CHR says it can't stop Palparan deployment

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—MAJ. Gen. Jovito Palparan cannot be stopped from sending Army troopers to urban areas in Central Luzon since he is doing that "within the mandate" of the Armed Forces of the Philippines to end insurgency, the top official of the Commission on Human Rights in the region said on Thursday.

Lawyer Jasmin Navarro-Regino, CHR regional director, said the agency would focus on monitoring the conduct of about 500 troopers in 57 barangays in Pampanga and Bulacan where Palparan, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, had repositioned soldiers and established detachments since last week.

The urban armies were assigned to the City of San Fernando, Angeles City and Mabalacat town in Pampanga and in Malolos City, and Bulacan, Obando, Hagonoy, Pandi and Sta. Maria towns in Bulacan.

"We can't meddle in that mandate," Regino said, adding the CHR would closely look into reports of human rights violations.

Two transport leaders in Barangay Pulong Bulo in Angeles City went missing but surfaced on Wednesday after soldiers questioned their supposed ties with the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Organizers of the Workers Alliance in Region III, a chapter of the Kilusang Mayo Uno, reported being tailed by military men.

Regino said in cases where soldiers commit violations or abuses, villagers should report these to barangay human rights action centers.

These centers have been in existence since 1995 and are being revived now to complement the regional CHR's 26 personnel.

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CHILDREN at the elementary school of San Juan in Casiguran town wear masks for protection against ash falls from Bulusan. NINO JESUS ORBETA

Village execs condemn resurgence of 'jueteng'

LEGAZPI CITY—THE LIGA NG mga Barangay in Daet, Camarines Norte condemned the resurgence of unabated jueteng in 25 barangays in their place in a resolution dated June 8 urging the government to immediately take a decisive action to stop the illegal numbers game.

The group, supported by some 300 concerned residents, also observed Independence Day on June 12 with a rally denouncing the illegal numbers game.

The resolution said rampant jueteng operations in Camarines Norte do not only harm the economy of the state but also encourages minors to gamble.

In the same resolution, the Liga ng mga Barangay requested authorities, particularly the Philippine National Police, Department of Interior and Local Government, Camarines Norte Gov. Jesus Typoco and President Macapagal-Arroyo to enforce Republic Act 9287 or the Anti-Illegal Gambling Law, which provides stiff penalties for those involved in illegal gambling.

"It is our moral and social obligation to eradicate jueteng which causes a deterioration of virtues, erodes the morality of every Filipino who depends on this illegal game of chance, makes us enslaved by and victims of unscrupulous elected and appointed public officials, and even greedy private individuals who are only after financial gains, without revenues going back to the government," the league said.

When the Inquirer tried to contact Bishop Benjamin Almoneda of Daet for comment, Fr. Ernesto Corre, chancellor of the archdiocese, said the bishop was not available because he was busy preparing for a conference but spoke on his behalf.

Corre said the Church is steadfastly against the illegal numbers game and any form of immorality.

He said the advocacy against jueteng should not only assail government officials and people behind it but should people to a realization that jueteng was not good and that it had never made the people who patronize it any richer.

A veteran media practitioner in Daet contacted by the Inquirer confirmed rampant jueteng operations in Camarines Norte, with three draws a day.

He cited the winning combinations on June 14 as 29-2, 12-38 and 15-22. In yesterday morning's draw, the combination 35-34 won.

Each P1 won P900, he added.

Jueteng has also been reported rampant in some parts of Camarines Sur, Sorsogon and Albay.

Upon learning of the resurgence of jueteng in some parts of the province, Albay Gov. Fernando V. Gonzales has ordered police provincial director Supt. Roque Ramirez to immediately direct town police chiefs to stop the illegal numbers game.

A certain Garcia is the one behind jueteng in most parts of Albay province. *Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Air, water tested around Bulusan

CASIGURAN, SORSOGON—IT remains safe for animals to drink from rivers and springs in this town, according to an environment specialist who conducted water tests in Barangay Inlagadian in this town as part of the preparedness plan should Mt. Bulusan erupt.

Engineer Juliet Manlapaz, senior environment specialist of the Environment Management Bureau Bicol office, said the water was still safe based on results of tests made to find out the water's level of acidity and alkalinity.

She could not say, however, if the water was also safe for human consumption.

Engineer Rommel Gapayao, also a senior environment specialist of EMB Bicol, gathered air samples in the same village, but the result of the testing, according to him, would only be available next week since the air sample would still be brought to the EMB Bicol laboratory in Legazpi City for analysis.

Casiguran was the first town where the EMB Bicol conducted water and air tests.

Although Bulusan appears to be calm, its eruption remains imminent

Other areas

The EMB personnel will go to the other affected towns like Irosin and Juban in the coming days to conduct the same tests.

Casiguran Mayor Edwin Hamor and municipal health officer Salvador Isidro Destura have been going around the town to conduct an information campaign and to distribute face masks.

Yesterday, they went to San Juan Elementary School in Barangay San Juan, Casiguran to distribute face masks to the students.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is set to visit the town of Juban on Saturday to confer with local officials of the province and the other towns affected by the Bulusan volcano.

Information from the Presidential Management Staff employees, who met with Gov. Raul Lee and Juban Mayor Tess Guab-Fragata, indicated that Ms Arroyo wants to personally look at the preparations being made by the various disaster coordinating councils.

A Phivolcs bulletin issued at 8:30 a.m. on June 15 advised the public to consider the high possibility of explosions that are likely to generate ash falls and affect the northern portion of the volcano.

A brief tremor was recorded on Wednesday morning, which, volcanologists said, would indicate the movement of magma.

Reiterating its alert level 2 warning, the Phivolcs advised the public to avoid the areas within the four-kilometer permanent danger zone because although Bulusan appears to be calm, its eruption remains imminent.

The bulletin warned residents near the rivers and streams around the volcano to be mindful of sudden volcanic flows due to ash and other loose volcanic deposits from the upper slopes that may move toward the direction of areas in the 4-km permanent danger zone. *Niño Jesus Orbeta and Bobby Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon*

A CHILD wades in shallow lahar brought by a previous explosion of Bulusan. NINO JESUS ORBETA

NPAs torch bus in Agusan; attack linked to reb taxes

BUTUAN CITY—NEW PEOPLE'S Army (NPA) rebels torched a mini-bus in Carmen, Agusan del Norte on Wednestlay, police said yesterday.

The bus had just left the city for Magsaysay, Misamis Oriental when flagged down by four rebels in Barangay Ruales at about 8 p.m., according to SP01 Hermie Salon, Carmen town police investigator.

Salon said the rebels ordered the passengers to disembark before they set the bus on fire after pouring gasoline into it.

Salon said the bus owner might have failed to pay revolutionary tax to the rebels.

The 8,000-strong NPA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of The Philippines (CPP) and collects revolutionary taxes from businesses in its areas of operation.

It is in Washington's list of international terror groups.

The NPA has been waging a protracted war against the government for the establishment of a Maoist state for the last 37 years. *Franklin M. Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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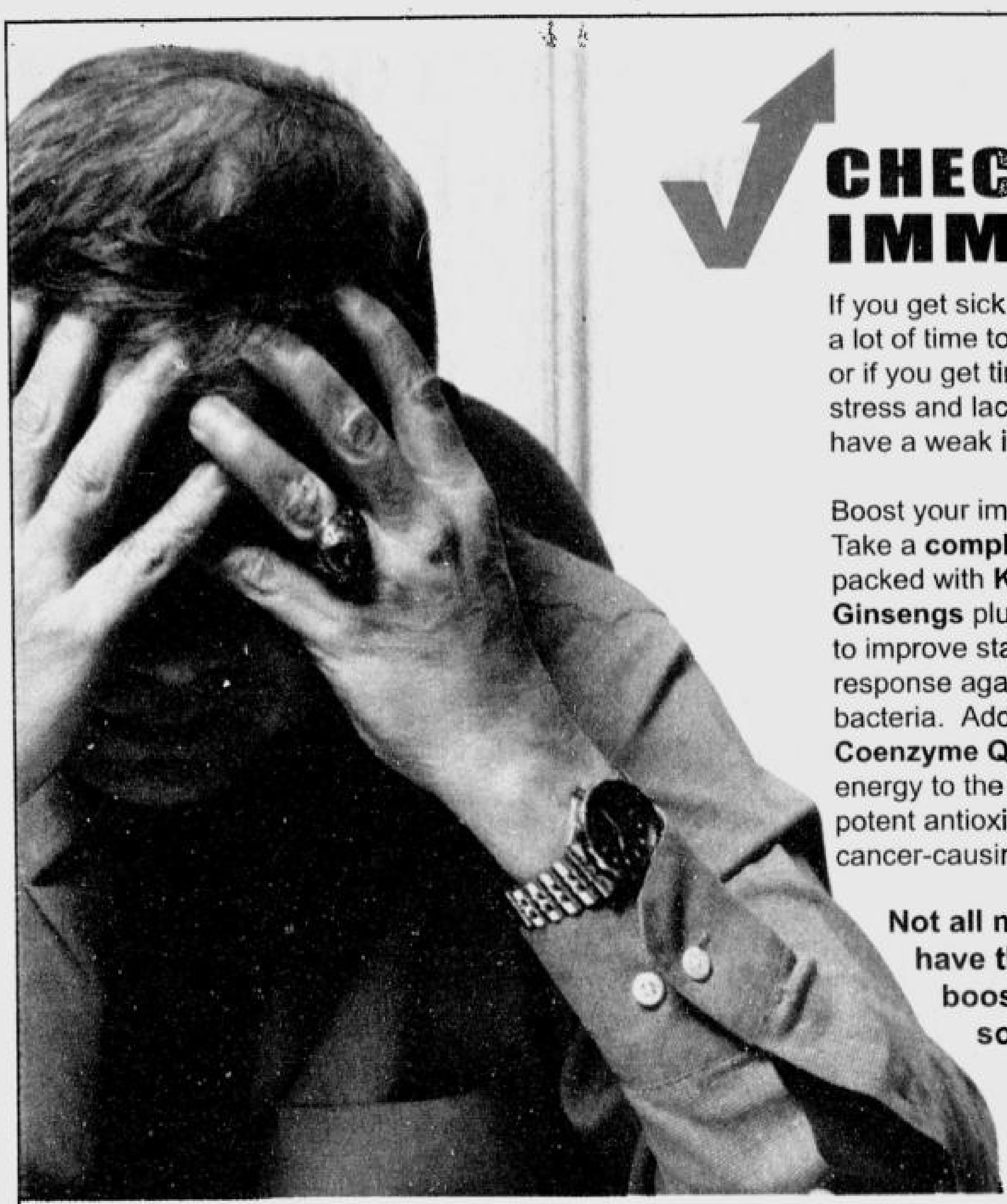

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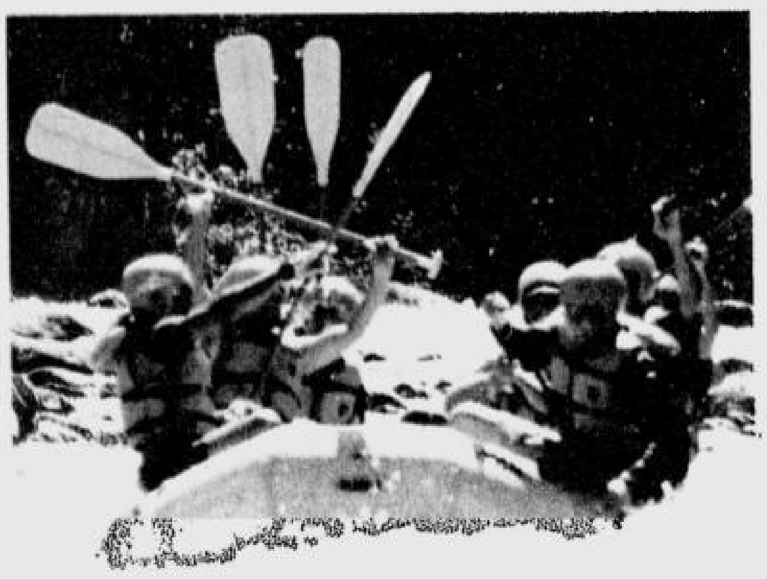
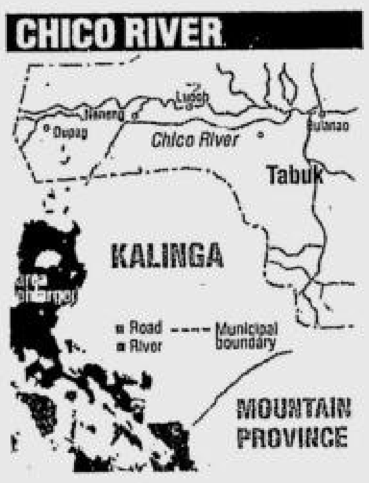


PADDLERS brave the rapids along the Chico River in a whitewater rafting competition to promote tourism in Tabuk, Kalinga. Organizers of the competition described the river as one of the best whitewater rafting sites in the country. EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON

Whitewater rafting boosts Tabuk tourism

TABUK, KALINGA—THE ANNUAL whitewater rafting contest here ended on Wednesday with cheers from competing teams that braved the rapid waters and waves along the 10-km stretch of the Chico River.



Tabuk Mayor Camilo Lammawin Jr. said the annual event has boosted the tourism potentials of this upland town dubbed as the country's whitewater rafting capital.

Aside from the rapid waters of the Chico River that flow to the Cagayan Valley, the river is the biggest source of irrigation water for the region.

Bulanao village rafters topped the event, besting paddlers from the Army-Kalinga and the Association of Barangay Captains-Tabuk, who came in second and third, respectively.

Danny Bravo, president of the Kalinga Raft Guides Association, said the Chico River has been one of the best whitewater rafting sites in the country.

"This Tabuk area has an average of Class 3 rapids rafting trip, which is good for beginners. The other areas in Kalinga have Classes 4 and 5 recommended for professional paddlers who have been veterans in whitewater rafting. Class 6 is not for commercial rafting because it is risky for rafters and only those daring enough can test this class," he said.

Tabuk Councilor Oliver Gacuya, Whitewater Rafting Challenge committee chair, called the Tabuk whitewater trip "exhilarating." It passes through the ancient mini-rice terraces, lush green fields, pastoral villages and narrow limestone canyons.

He said the competition has tested the cooperation and team building efforts of paddlers and guides.

"It works wonders for a group activity," he added.

The rafters were supposed to start at the upper river portion of Sitio Tumiangan in Barangay Dupag here but officials transferred the starting point to Barangay Naneng and Balatoc-Lucob as the finish line "to restore cultural beliefs of peace and sympathy during time of gloom," he said.

He was referring to the murder of militant Kalinga leader Rafael Markus Bangit, 47, at the other side of the river in Tumiangan.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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Going organic way to beat rising costs

PAGADIAN CITY—With the increasing prices of chemical farm inputs because of rising costs of petroleum products, the only way for farmers to unburden themselves is to go organic, Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban said here on Wednesday.

Calcium Phosphate
Oriental Herbs Nutrient
BIO-FERTILIZER

BOTTLES of organic fertilizer produced in Pagadian. PDI PHOTO

Inorganic fertilizers are produced when fossil fuel is processed.

Panganiban visited the city in time for the national launching of the Agri-Kalikasan program of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

"There is no better way to solve the high cost of farming but by going organic, which is both beneficial to farmers and to the environment," Panganiban said.

The program is supported by a P276 million grant from the Japanese government. Under the program, the DA will construct compost shredders for producing organic fertilizer.

While being tested in Zamboanga del Sur, Panganiban said Agri-Kalikasan would be implemented in at least 27 provinces in the country.

It will also use biogas technology and other cost efficient technologies to benefit farming communities.

He said Zamboanga del Sur was chosen as a pilot area because small farmers associations were already using the technique and the local government has been pushing for an environment-friendly method of farming.

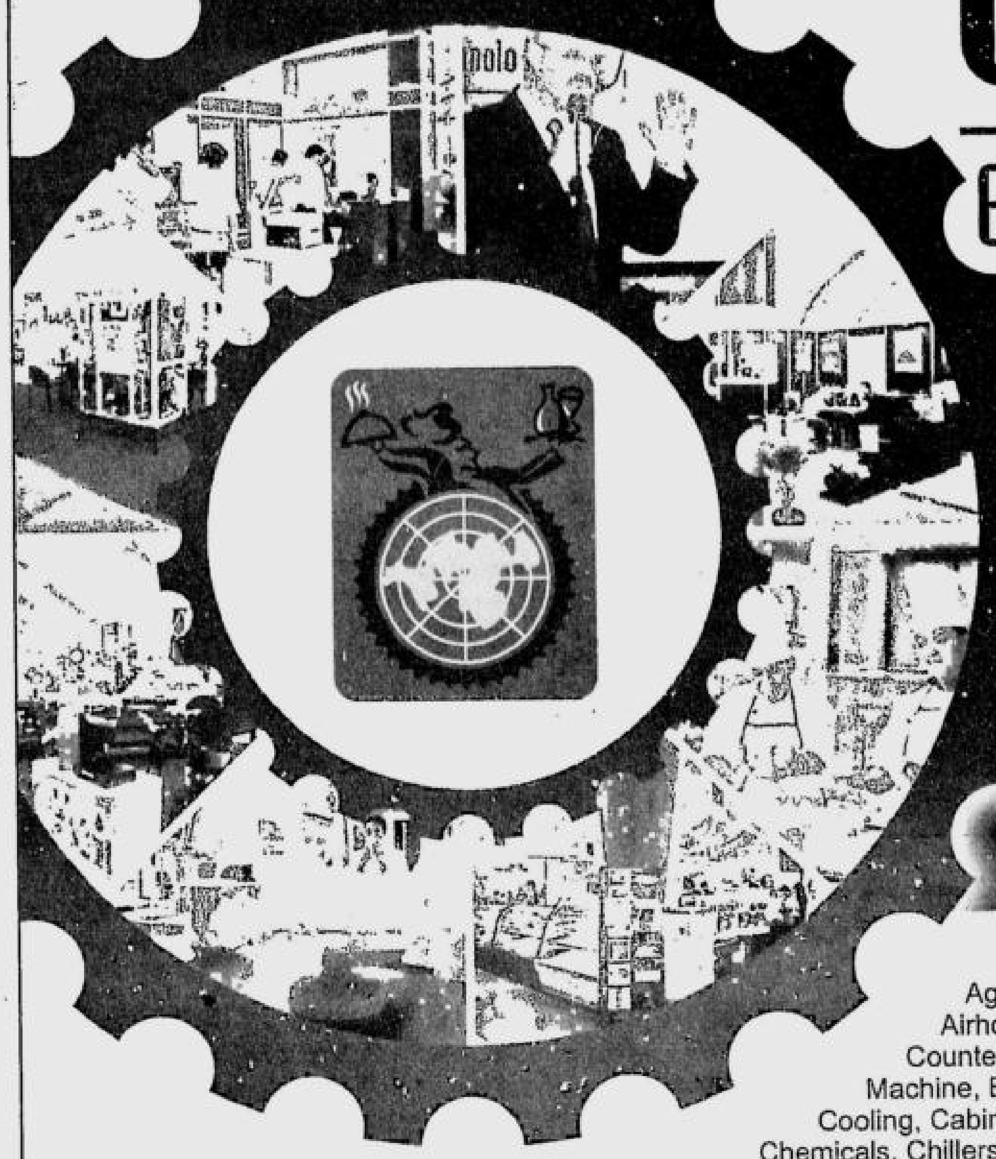
In fact, the provincial government has banned the burning of rice straws to encourage farmers to use them in producing organic fertilizers.

"This is just the initial step for the entire country to go into organic farming," he said.

Panganiban said aside from reducing the cost of farming, organic inputs also help the environment because these are fully biodegradable.

Michael F Sarcauga, PDI Mindanao Bureau

21-23 June 2006 ▪ PICC Forum, Manila ▪ 10:00 AM 7:00 PM



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SEMINAR SCHEDULE

SEMINAR ROOM A (FREE ADMISSION)

JUNE 21, 2006

1:00 - 3:00 pm	Best Energy Management Practices for Steam Systems *Spirax Sarco Phils.*
3:30 - 5:30 pm	CO2 Refrigerant for Industrial Refrigeration Seminar *Engr. Cesar Luis Lim*

JUNE 22, 2006

10:00 am - 12:00 nn	Industrial Refrigeration Seminar with Emphasis on Liquid Overfeed System *Engr. Cesar Luis Lim*
12:30 - 2:30 pm	Savings Using Variable Frequency Drives *Jupp & Company*
3:00 - 6:00 pm	Thermal Energy Storage Systems Seminar *Engr. Cesar Luis Lim*

JUNE 23, 2006

10:00 - 12:00 nn	Product Presentation *Schneider Electric Philippines, Inc.*
12:30 - 2:30 pm	Hydrocracked Lubricant Technology *Engr. Johnson Lim, Mechatronics*
4:00 - 6:00 pm	Product Presentation *Enertech Systems Industries, Inc.*

ASHRAE SEMINAR ROOM B

Seminar Fee: Php 500 per topic

A Special Seminar Series conducted in partnership with the American Society of Heating Refrigerating & Air-conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE)

JUNE 21, 2006

1:00 - 5:30 pm	Air-Conditioning Cooling Load *Engr. Rosendo C. Perez, Jr.*

JUNE 22, 2006

10:00 am - 12:00 nn	Air Conditioning Equipment Selection *Engr. Luci Limson, Concepcion Carrier*
12:30 - 6:00 pm	Psychrometrics *Engr. Rosendo C. Perez, Jr.*

JUNE 23, 2006

10:00 - 12:00 nn	Pumps *AMZEN*
12:30 - 5:00 pm	Fans & Blowers, Design and Construction *Engr. Jason Tan, Niagara Industrial Equipment Corp.*

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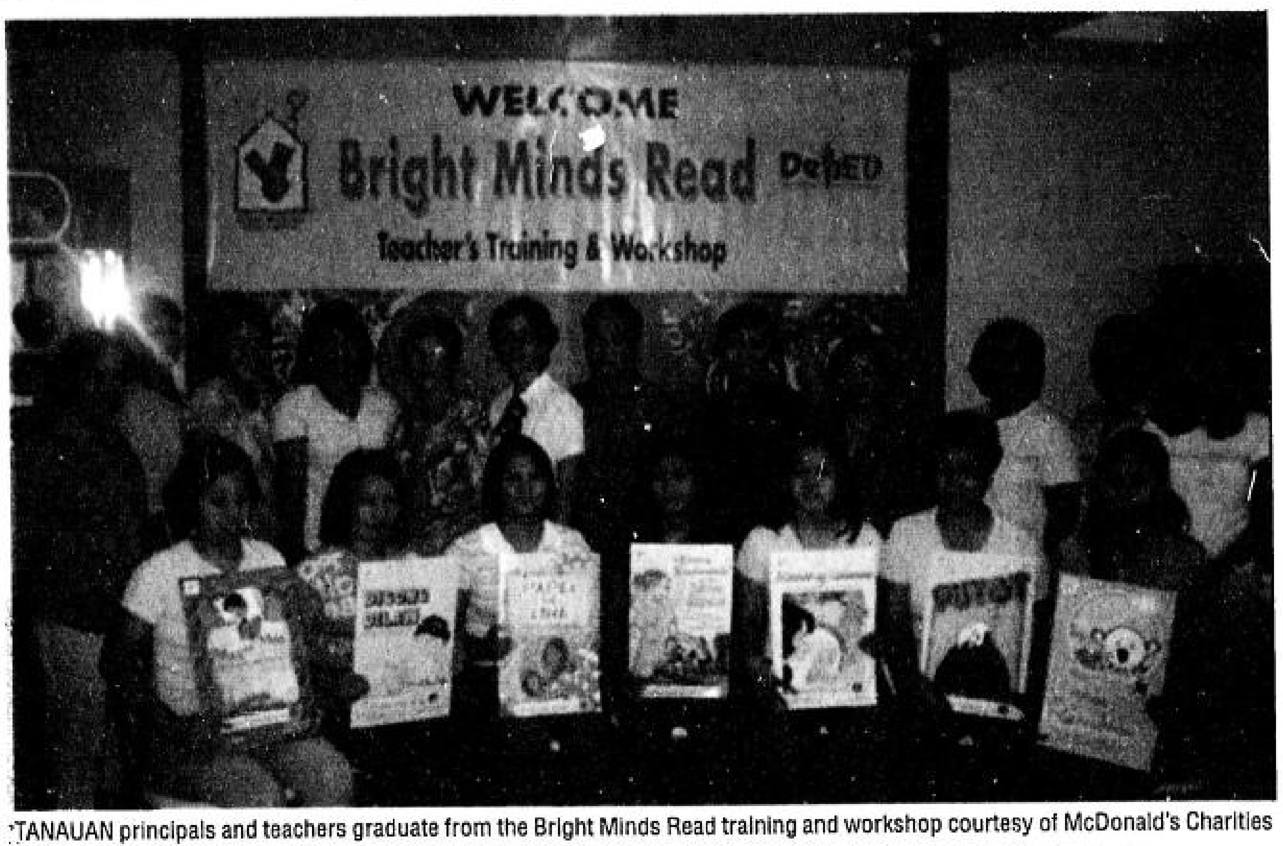
McDonald's, DepEd unite for right to read



TANAUAN principals and teachers graduate from the Bright Minds Read training and workshop courtesy of McDonald's Charities and the Municipality of Tanauan.

THE POPULAR SAYING, "TWO HEADS ARE better than one" wouldn't have survived to this day if it weren't an indisputable truth. Indeed, there is strength in numbers especially when a task seems too monumental to accomplish alone.

Such is the plight of thousands of Filipino grade school children who spend their elementary years performing poorly to the point that some of them fail to move on to high school. These are children handicapped by their inability to read. They are also the reason McDonald's Charities and the Department of Education-NCR (DepEd-NCR) have joined forces to bring beginning reading to grade 1 students in public schools with Bright Minds Read (BMR).

BMR is a program that aims to promote beginning reading among Filipino children in support of DepEd's goal to make "Every Child A Reader." It is also the product of DepEd-NCR's collaboration with McDonald's Charities in fulfillment of Republic Act 8525 which aims to create partnerships with businesses, foundations, NGOs and individuals towards providing much needed assistance and service to public schools.

"McDonald's Charities firmly believes that proper education can lift kids to a better tomorrow. Our participation in BMR shows our support for DepEd-NCR's efforts in improving the quality of education in our country and in fostering a brighter future for the Filipino youth," said McDonald's Charities president Kenneth S. Yang.

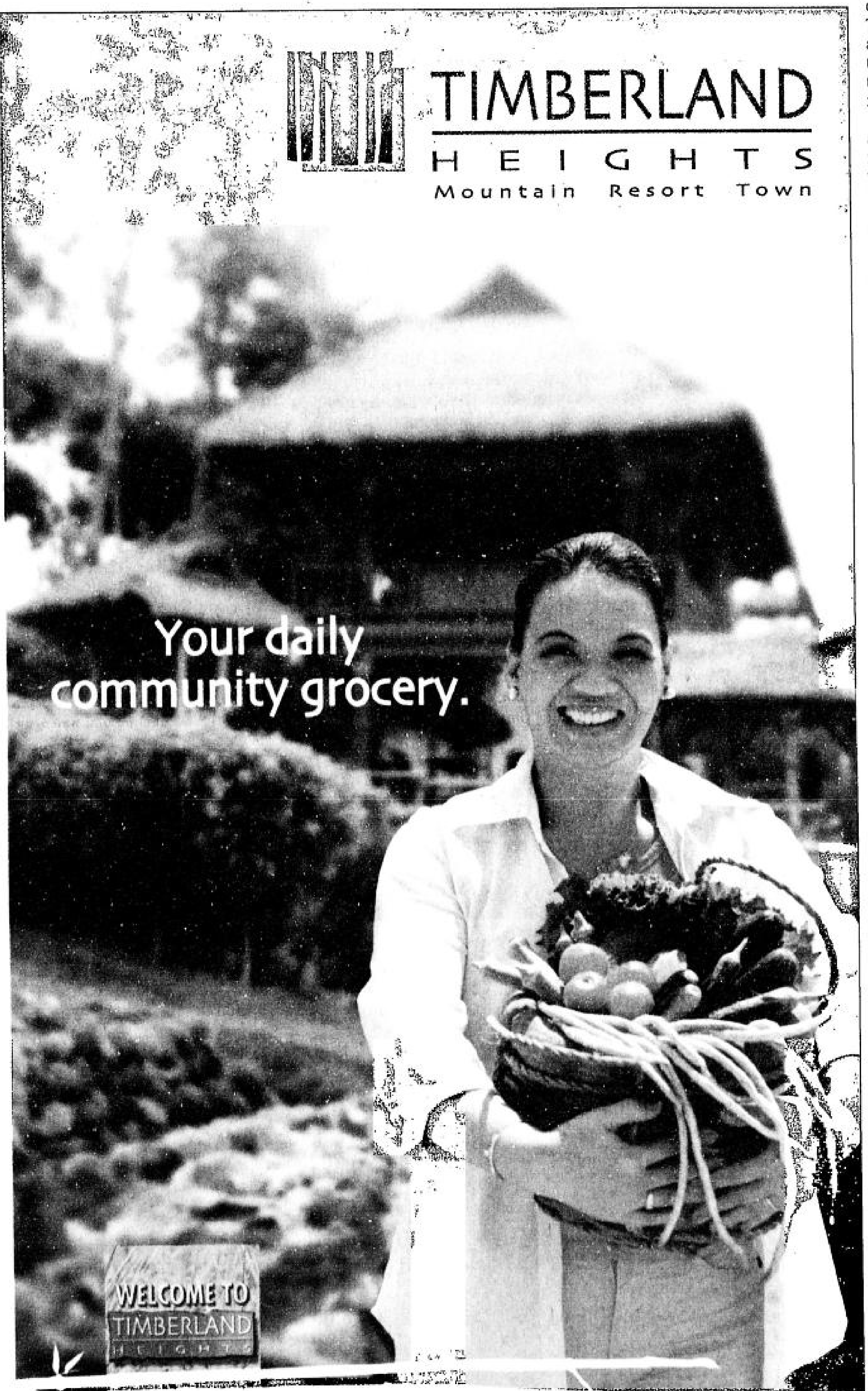
4 nonreaders out of 10

BMR was created to address a 2002 DepEd-NCR survey indicating that four out of 10 first graders are nonreaders. These nonreaders become either "students at risk" (STAR) of not qualifying for grade two, or they fall behind for the duration of their schooling simply because they cannot read well.

In the same year, McDonald's Charities and DepEd-NCR collaborated on the pilot implementation of the BMR program. It was conducted on 4,200 grade 1 pupils in 14 schools. By the end of school year 2003, 68 percent of grade 1 pupils could read sentences and answer questions about what they read, while 89 percent had improved their comprehension skills. For 2004, the students' reading skills posted an astounding 81.52-percent mastery. As of school year 2005, BMR achieved its target of zero nonreaders with all 4,200 pupils reading with comprehension.

"We couldn't have accomplished this without the support of organizations like McDonald's Charities. Their continuous commitment to Bright Minds Read will help us reach more children and bring out their full potential as students," said DepED-NCR Regional Director Dr. Teresita Domalanta.

Currently, there are 65 schools in Metro Manila benefiting from the BMR Program. The BMR kits are now being adapted in 500 classrooms in Caloocan City funded by Caloocan local government, and numerous public schools in Baguio, Cebu, Iloilo, Dumaguete, General Santos City, Lipa City, and Kidapawan City in Cotabato. McDonald's Charities is working hard to take the program further by expanding it to 75 target schools in the NCR and in other parts of the country where a McDonald's restaurant is present. It hopes to bring BMR kits to schools with high incidences of nonreaders in all 17 regions nationwide by 2008.



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OFW Expo complements nat'l agenda

PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARroyo recently expressed her support for the 5th Pamilyang Overseas Filipino Workers-Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Expo. The expo is ongoing until June 18 at Expo Centro (beside Farmers Garden, in front of Farmers Market), Edsa, Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City.

In her message to the expo organizer Pamilyang OFW-SME Network Foundation Inc POFW-SMENFI), President Macapagal-Arroyo said: "Our government welcomes the holding of this exposition as it complements our National Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Agenda and our job generation and poverty alleviation efforts."

POFW-SMENFI president George Arriola said the event is a one-stop-shop for job, livelihood, investment and business opportunities which aims to empower the OFW families through entrepreneurship.

Dollars for local business

"For OFWs and their families, there is no better investment for their hard-earned dollars than establishing their own businesses. By doing this, our OFWs can look forward to a pleasant retirement from their work abroad. At the same time, they will be providing jobs and livelihood to many of our countrymen," the President said.

POFW-SMENFI marketing director Rey Camota II said the must-see event for the OFW and SME families is supported by Digital Playground Marketing, Energy FM and Sun Cellular DMPI as presentors and Central Affirmative Co Inc, Comworks Inc, Duty Free Philippines, Filinvest Land Inc, Inosphil Corp, Nissan Commonwealth, Nissan Shaw Center and Proquest Publishing Inc as sponsors.

This yearly event of the POFW-SMENFI also aims to make the country's more than 8 million OFW families, the 475,000 SME families and those involved in the overseas employment and small and medium enterprise industries be aware of the various opportunities and benefits offered by the government, private and non-government organization sectors.

For more inquiries, call POFW-SMENFI at 912-58-03.

JULIE ALIPALA/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

FROM FEARFUL TO FLORAL: Once, residents of Patikul, Jolo, refused to leave their homes after dark fearing for their lives. For strolling purposes, they went to the airport or to the wharf. But Joloanos now have not one but two parks profuse with flowers in the capitol compound. Two huge fountains are the centerpieces of the parks. The Imelda fountain (above) named after the former first lady exults water 3 meters high.

Jolo's floral park a haven for war-weary folk

From page A1

residents were now spending time at the Capitol.

A breathtaking sight

"I hired a tricycle and went there. What I discovered was really a breathtaking sight," she said.

Two huge fountains are the centerpieces of two floral parks spread over a hectare of land a few meters from the Capitol building.

Sulu Provincial Treasurer Jesus Cabelin, who was also the landscape artist, said the first fountain was named after former First Lady Imelda Marcos. The other park was named after the Lion's Club.

"The Imelda fountain is spurting three-meter high water that falls on its base. It's treated water, not potable," Cabelin said.

The Lion's Fountain spurts two meters high and has the same landscape design.

Both parks are laced with shrubs—hydrangea, camelia and rhododendron—and garden flowers like violets, zenia, petunias, carnations, dahlias, begonias, white tiger lilies, frangipanis, sky vine and hibiscus.

Just like Luneta

The well-lit parks are neatly fenced with white iron bars. Concrete benches are scattered about.

"So people can rest for a while and appreciate the different and colorful ornamental plants, shrubs and trees that we have here," Cabelin said.

There is no need to bring one's Walkman or, for the technologically advanced, their MP3 players.

"We have huge sound boxes in all corners playing music from 5 p.m. till midnight," Cabelin added.

"It's like I'm in Luneta," Bonita said, adding that "they (government) should have done this before."

A place to earn

Adelina Hairun, 44, a commercial photographer, said she had found a new place to earn a living.

"Now I earn about P80 to P100 per night," Hairun said.

Gov. Benjamin Loong said the province's rehabilitation was prompted by development aid packages like infrastructure and medical support.

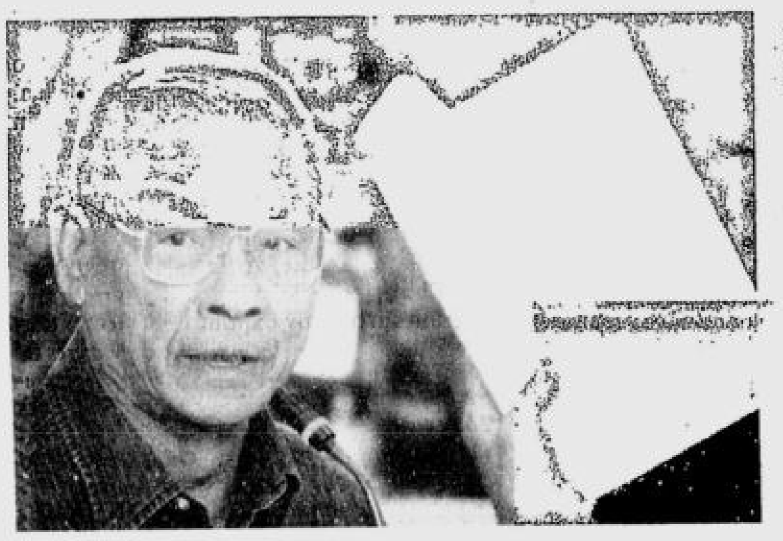
"We also want to provide a different atmosphere that will make everybody feel that Sulu is not a dangerous place for people," said Loong.

Provincial Administrator Don Loong said the Capitol Fountain Park was dedicated "to the children of Sulu, so they could see a beautiful park that would inspire them."

"We want to change the mind-set of children from conflict to peace," he added.

Whenever there are available funds, he would give Cabelin part of it "to improve not only the Capitol but as well as the entire Sulu," Loong said.

"This will serve as our showcase of how beautiful our province is. Parents no longer bring their children to Manila or Zamboanga City to enjoy the sight of Luneta or other beautiful parks. Even poor families can afford (coming here). Just a tricycle ride and they can see and appreciate what parks really look like," the governor said.



BIAZON: Premature release?

Shut up, pro-GMA allies slam Biazon

From page A1

zon did was very unethical. He's already preempting the decision of the other members," he added.

He said Biazon was being "irresponsible" in claiming that the President benefited from massive cheating in the last elections without showing any proof to back it up.

"That is pure hallucination on the part of Biazon. He should not have issued that statement when they do not have enough evidence to back up their claims," Pichay said.

"Biazon should think first before opening his mouth because otherwise the Senate would become a laughingstock," he added.

Tapes not authenticated

Pichay said that Biazon could not claim for certain that the President was wiretapped because the "Hello Garci" tapes were never authenticated.

He also questioned Biazon's claim that his statements were the gist of the Senate committee's findings on the "Hello Garci" tapes. He said the committee's report still had to be approved in plenary session.

The Senate is not the proper forum "to determine with certainty" whether elections were fraudulent, Nograles said. It is the courts, the electoral tribunals or the Commission on Elections who can do that after reviewing the evidence," he said.

Nograles said the Senate could forward its findings to the Ombudsman or file cases "so that the defendants can defend themselves."

"But the more important question is 'What legislation do they recommend from their fact-finding journey?' That's supposed to be the purpose of their exercise," he said.

Running out of ideas

Libanan and Javier said the attempt to resurrect the "Hello Garci" controversy showed that the opposition had run out of fresh issues to throw against the administration.

"Politicians who sing but one song, that PGMA lied, cheated and stole in 2004 should learn a new tune because our people are sick and tired of their baseless and recycled charges," Libanan said.

Javier said the Senate should focus on propoor and prodevelopment legislation rather than "resorting to politicking as its sole reason for existence."

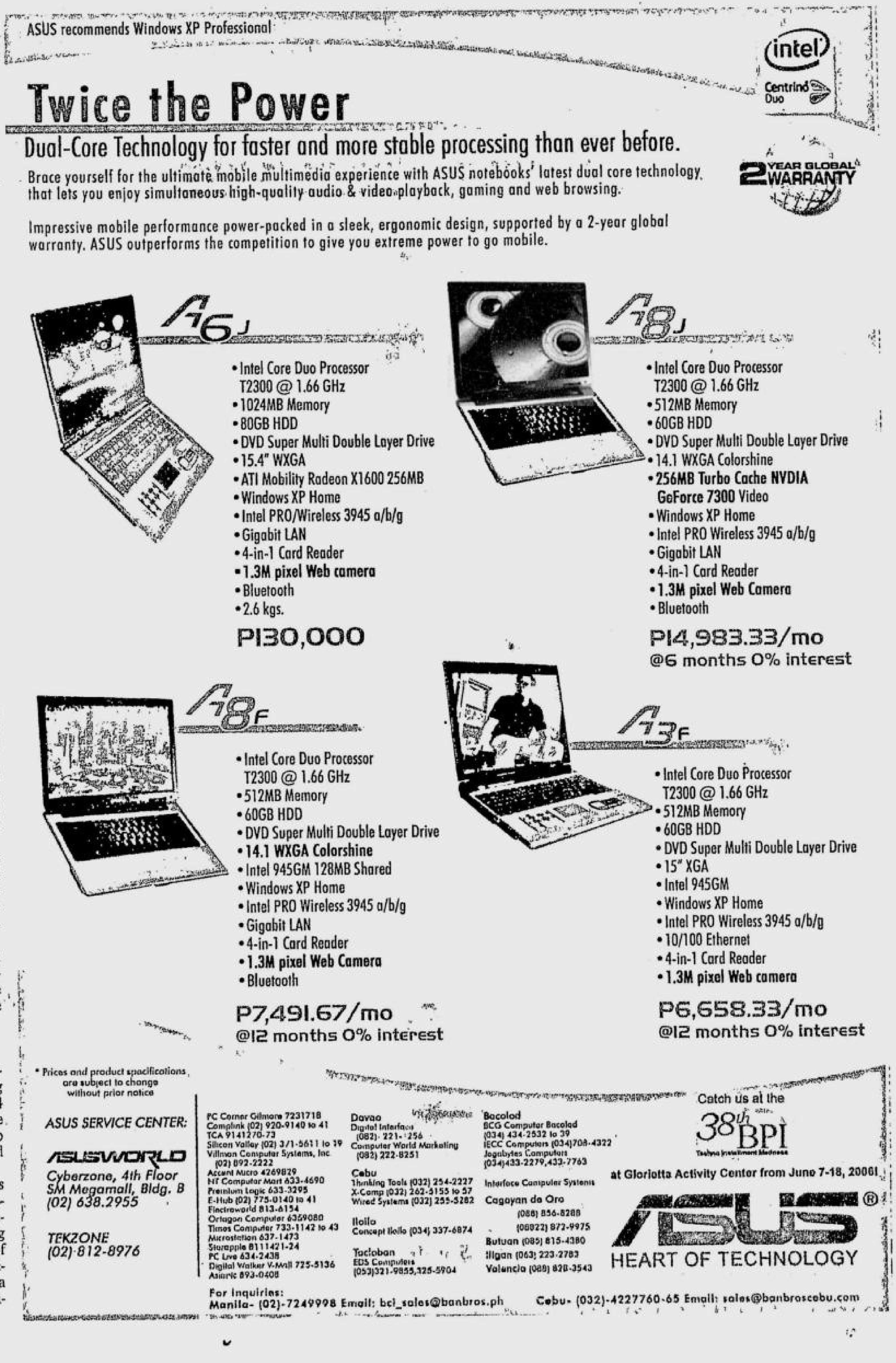
"What matters to people are jobs and higher incomes to offset the rising oil prices, and not useless partisan probes, especially on issues that have already been settled," he said.

"We urge senators to transcend their political interest and be sensitive to the needs of the people who elected them into office," he added.

3 bills

Yesterday, Biazon said his committee would report that cheating was committed during the 2004 polling but would leave it to the "proper agencies" what to do about the alleged electoral fraud and those behind it.

Biazon said at least three bills prohibiting the military from involvement in the elections, restricting the use of wiretapping equipment and restructuring of electoral boards to prevent electoral cheating would be filed as a result of his committee investigation.



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Duque richest Cabinet man while Lotilla is poorest

THE RICHEST MEMBER OF THE CABINET IS Health Secretary Francisco Duque III while the poorest is Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla.

Just like President Macapagal-Arroyo, most Cabinet members have personal fortunes running to the millions of pesos, as shown by their statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) for 2005.

The Palace records section released the SALN of 26 Cabinet members, excluding that of Chief of Staff Michael Defensor.

Duque led the secretaries with a personal net worth of P92.3 million. He declared total assets of P96.6 million against liabilities of P4.3 million.

He owns residential land and buildings in La Vista, Quezon City, Makati, Pasig and Dagupan and Lingayen in Pangasinan which he acquired for P72.1 million.

The health secretary declared cars worth P10.5 million, investments of P9 million, P3.6 million worth of jewelry and P1.4 million worth of appliances and equipment.

Following Duque in the top five list were: Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno (P89.42 million), Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz (P74.2 million), Trade Secretary Peter Favila (P74 million) and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez (P54.5 million).

Puno 2nd richest

Puno declared assets of P23.9 million—which included cash in the bank and on hand amounting to P8.2 million and furs, jewelry and paintings valued at P4.9 million—and real property worth P100.8 million. His total liabilities amounted to P35.5 million.

The poorest Cabinet members were Education Officer in Charge Fe Hidalgo and Lotilla with personal net worths of P2.5 million and P2.01 million, respectively.

Lotilla listed books, personal items, shares of stocks and savings amounting to P2.03 million and an agricultural property he acquired in 2003 in Sibalom, Antique, for P31,000. He listed under liabilities a loan of P50,000 from the Government Service Insurance System.

Eight others in 2 digits

Eight Cabinet members followed the top five, with assets also in the two-digit category: Vice President Noli de Castro with a personal net worth of P51.7 million, Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral (P44.5 million), Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya (P43.3 million) and Finance Secretary Margarito Teves (P43.2 million).

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye declared a personal net worth of P29.8 million, slighter higher than that of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita's P26.9 million.

Ermita declared several properties—a nine-hectare farmland in Nasugbu, Batangas, and three condominiums, among others—with acquisition costs of P22.6 million but currently valued at P95.6 million. He had total liabilities of P16.8 million.

Bunye owns two houses in Alabang and Makati and two condominium units in Makati and Quezon City, with current fair market value of P27.7 million. He also declared personal and other properties amounting to P16.8 million, in the form of country club shares, motor vehicles, and cash in bank and jewelry.

Presidential Management Staff chief Arthur Yap declared a personal net worth of P17.9 million, while Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman has a net worth of P13.96 million. Tourism Secretary Joseph Durano was listed at P12.2 million.

Single-digit millionaires

In the single digit region are Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas (P9.6 million), Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza (P8.2 million), Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes (P8.1 million), Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo (P7.9 million), Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo (P6.6 million) and Science and Technology Secretary Estrella Alabastro (P6.3 million).

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales declared a personal net worth of P5.9 million, while former PMS chief and now ambassador to Greece Rigoberto Tiglao had P5.1 million.

Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban has a personal net worth of P4.6 million while Socio-Economic Secretary Romulo Neri declared P3.5 million. *Christine O. Avendaño*

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Wayward truck kills 3, hurts 12

Jeepload of students among victims in Antipolo mishap

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THREE PERSONS, INCLUDING A 10-year-old boy, were killed after a 10-wheel truck filled with gravel and rocks plowed into two passenger jeeps, two tricycles, a motorcycle and a water truck in Antipolo City yesterday noon.

Eleven students of the Mayamot Elementary School who were on their way home from classes, and a mother, were also hurt in the accident that caused a major traffic jam along the busy Marcos Highway, investigator PO1 Vic Madamba told the INQUIRER.

The truck, loaded with rocks for construction, first crashed into a passenger minibus after its brakes failed, causing it to spin around and skid into oncoming traffic on Marcos Highway, Madamba added.

Survivors

But the dump truck driver, Rolando Sorilla, and his helper survived the accident unhurt.

Sorilla had just come from Cogeo in Antipolo City to pick up his load of gravel and was on his way to Masinag, also in Antipolo to deliver the load at about 12:30 p.m. yesterday when he suddenly lost control of the vehicle along the Marcos Highway.

The truck first hit a passenger jeepney before it swerved to the opposite lane, this time ramming into another jeepney full of students on their way home from school.

Driver Nestor Rito, 50, and John Kenneth Taroy, 10, who were seated in front of the jeep, were seriously injured and later died at the Amang Rodriguez Medical Center, where the other pupils are still undergoing treatment.

The wayward truck also ran over a motorcycle also on the opposite lane, killing on the spot driver Fernando Baylon, 32.

The truck also hit a parked tricycle, another motorcycle parked on the sidestreet and a moving Isuzu Elf Truck about to deliver water.

Manila Radio DZBB reported the driver of the truck was detained for questioning. *With a report from AP*

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ACCEPT
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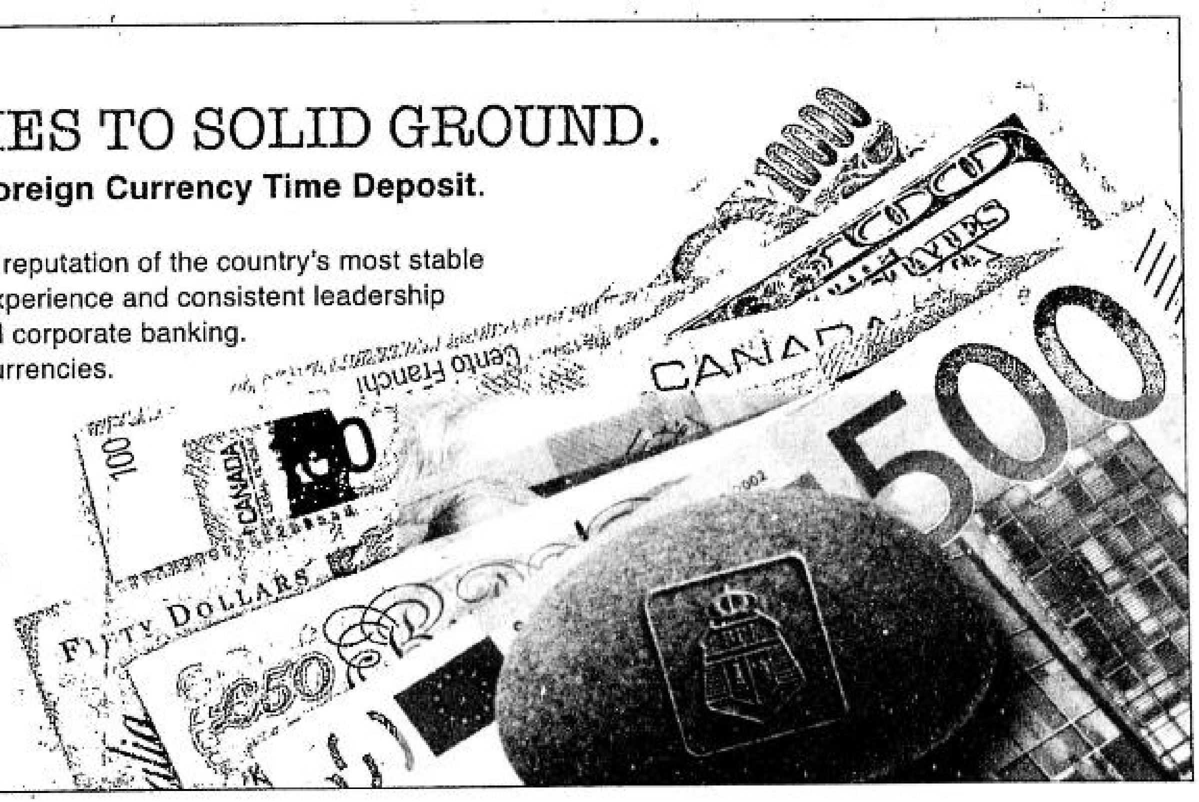

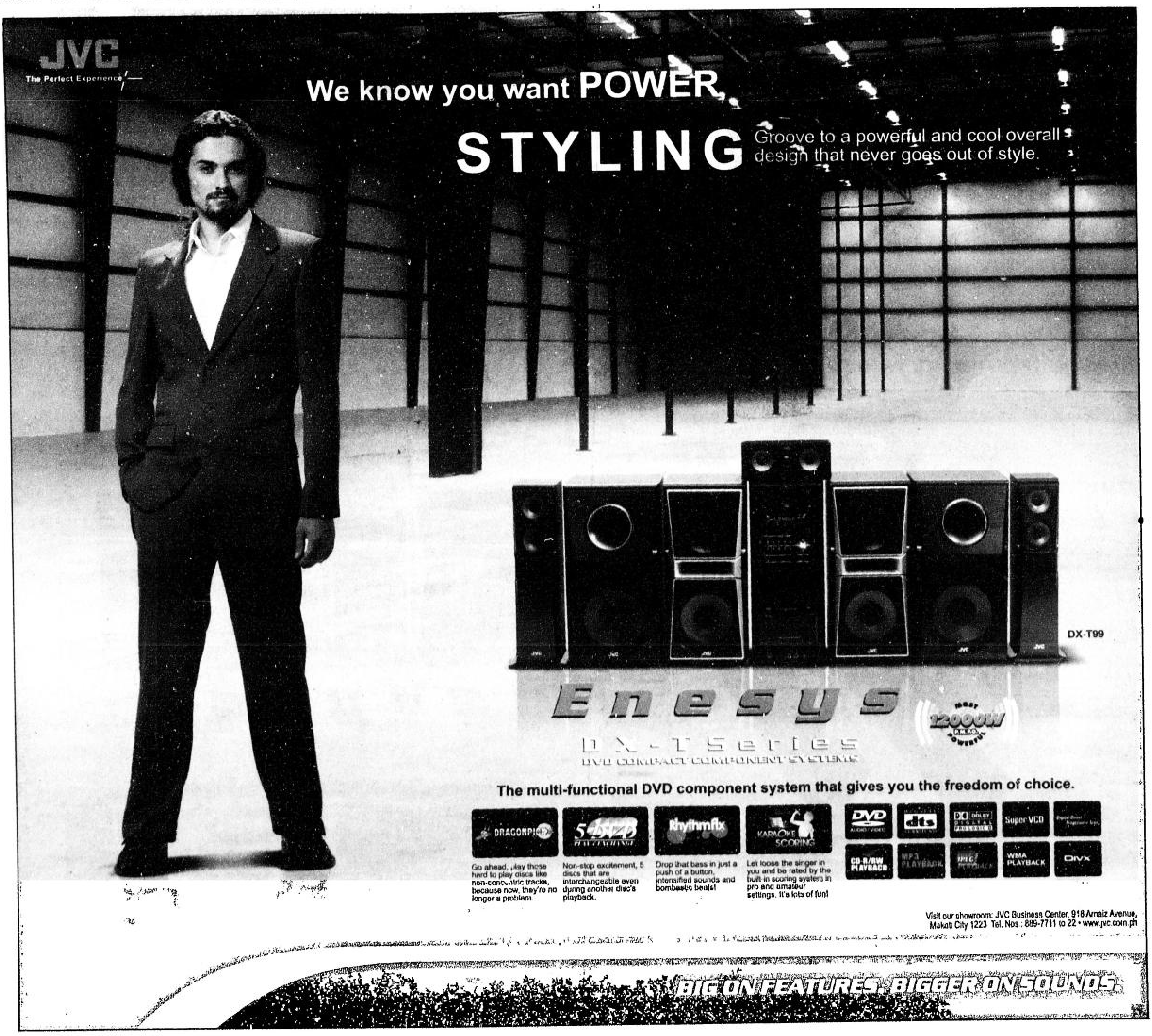

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A BRIDGE TOO CLOSE
A resident of the coastal area near Zapote, Las Piñas City gathers driftwood to build a bridge from their house on stilts to the shore. ROMY HOMILLADA

2 top cops relieved for 'security lapses'

By DJ Yap

TWO RANKING OFFICIALS AT CAMP Bagong Diwa in Taguig City, headquarters of the National Capital Region Police Office, were relieved from their posts the other night for "security lapses" when an explosion rocked the facility on Tuesday.

The officials were identified as Supt. Inocentes Capuno and Chief Inspector Paulino Logronio, security and base police officers, said National Capital Region Police Office officer in charge Chief Supt. Juan Urani Jr. "They were relieved because they committed lapses in securing the camp," Urani told reporters yesterday..

On June 13, a blast triggered by a "low explosive" damaged a Special Weapons and Tactics van parked in the NCRPO compound. It was the third in a series of blasts that happened in Metro Manila. The explosions, however, caused no injuries. Minor explosions also occurred at the Grepalife Building in Makati City and the Philcoa area in Quezon City. A group calling itself "Taong Bayan at Kawal" claimed responsibility for the bombings, but police said they were still verifying the group's existence.

Police also released an artist's sketch of a "possible suspect" in the Bagong Diwa blast based on a description provided by a utility worker who saw the man walk away from the van after the blast.

SENIOR Supt. Felipe Rojas holds an artist's sketch of the SWAT van bombing suspect. RAFFY LERMA

Policemen raid stalls selling used mobile phones in Marikina

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

SELLING SECOND HAND WARES? Better get a permit from the police first.

Otherwise, vendors and stall owners face arrest according to the law, Marikina City Police chief Senior Supt. Manuel Gaerlan told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"Those selling second-hand products should not only have proper documents. The vendors should also secure permits from the police," Gaerlan said.

He made the warning during a surprise inspection of a mall in the city yesterday noon. The National Capital Region Police Office assisted operatives of the National Telecommunications Commission in checking out stalls selling cellular phones inside the Riverbanks Mall.

In the course of their visit, the teams found out that many stalls did not have the required permit from the NTC to sell mobile phones.

They also confiscated several used phones after the stall owners failed to show proper documents during the one-hour inspection.

"The operation was meant to curb the rampant selling of stolen phones," Gaerlan said.

5 suspected car thieves killed in QC shootout

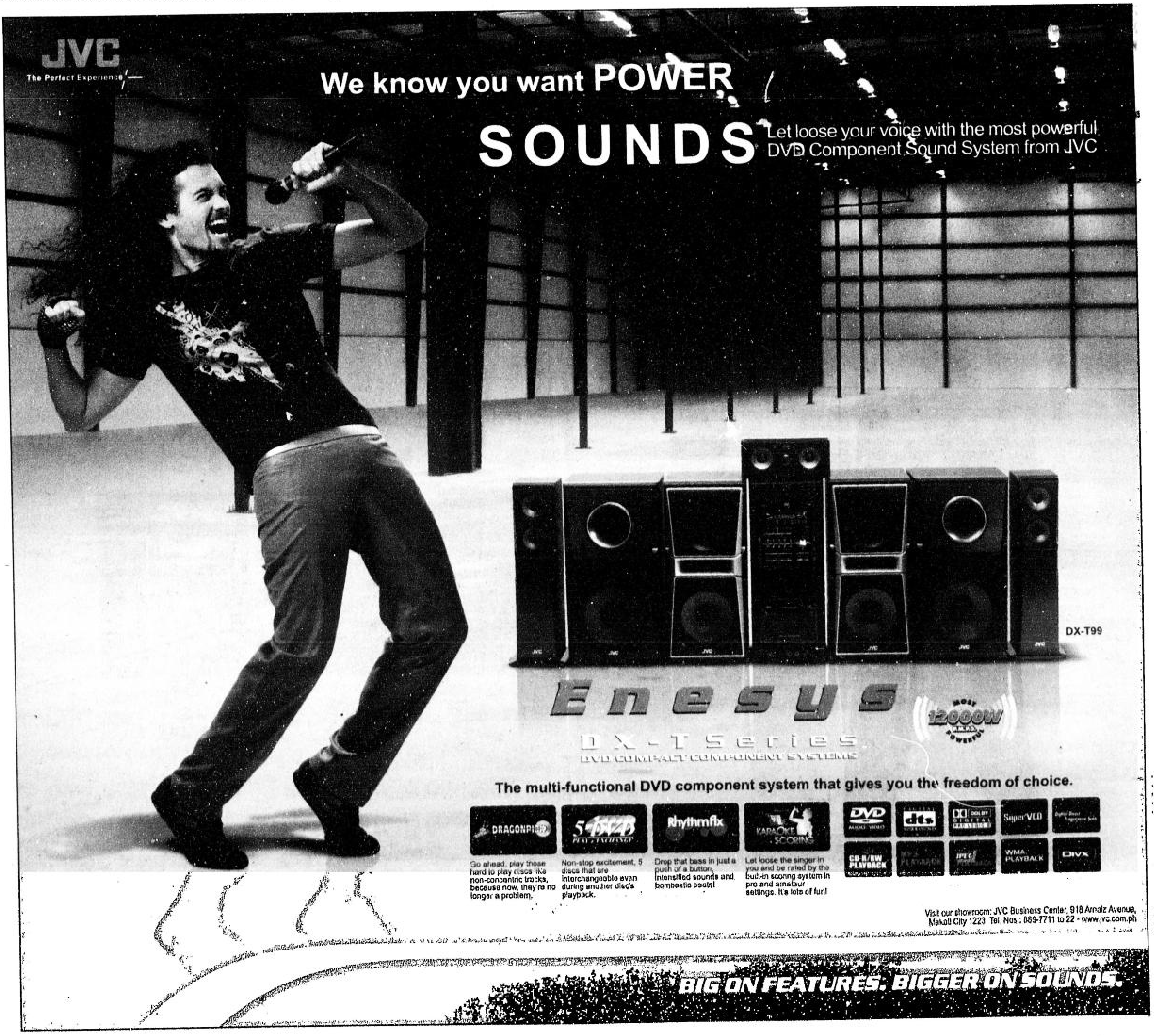
By DJ Yap

FIVE SUSPECTED CAR THIEVES WHO stole a taxi at gunpoint were killed in an alleged shootout with Quezon City policemen the other night. Four of the suspects died on the spot after trading gunshots with agents of the Quezon City Police District Intelligence and Investigation Division (DIID). A fifth suspect, who was rushed to the hospital after the gunfight, died while undergoing treatment. All five remained unidentified yesterday, but were believed to be members of a notorious gang of taxi robbers.

Police said the group robbed taxi driver Rene Dahunan at about 9 p.m. and forcibly took his cab along the NIA Road in Parañaque City. The victim reported the incident to the police who immediately caught sight of the taxi and tailed it, until it reached Barangay Laging Handa, where they lost their quarry.

Policemen saw the taxi at a dimly-lit parking area at the corner of Tomas Morato Avenue and Kamuning Road, and identified themselves. The suspects suddenly opened fire at the police car, resulting in a brief exchange of gunfire, investigators said.

WORTHY CAUSE
Northern Police District director Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil and his men with Maria Eliza (center), widow of photo journalist Alberto Orsolino, and the Orsolino children after the signing of a memorandum assuring the children of educational support from the NPD. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO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End of the line

FOUR suspected motorcycle thieves believed to be operating in the southern part of Metro Manila fell into the hands of the police on Wednesday night in Las Piñas City. Police identified the suspects as Thomas Lopez, Alene Wagan, Eric dela Cruz and Rolando Baao, alleged members of a gang called the "Brownside Trese." The four were nabbed after Allan Chua reported to the police that he saw two men speeding off on his Honda motorcycle on Wednesday noon, said Senior Insp. Garry Garen, chief of the Las Pinas intelligence division and anticarnapping unit. Dela Cruz and Baao were arrested in Baclaran, Parañaque City while Lopez and Wagan were arrested in Barangay Pamplona Dos in Las Piñas.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Fake calculators seized

CLOSE to P4 million worth of counterfeit Casio calculators were confiscated during a raid conducted by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on a business establishment in Quiapo, Manila last week. NBI Acting Director Nestor Mantaring identified the business establishment as G.B. Armonio Enterprises, with stalls located at Manila City Plaza on Carriedo Street and CGM Building on Evangelista Street. Owners Bona Tan, Jenny Tan and Genaro Armonio now face trademark infringement charges, said NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division chief Jose Justo Yap. According to the IPRD report, the E.B Astudillo and Associates law office, in behalf of Casio Computer Co. Ltd, had earlier complained about the proliferation of fake Casio electronic calculators in the city. Surveillance operations conducted by the NBI traced the sources of the counterfeit products to the suspects' stores, the report showed.

Margaux C. Ortiz

NCWP 60th anniversary

The National Council of Women of the Philippines, headed by Dr. Amelou Benitez, will hold a Central Council meeting on the occasion of its 60th anniversary with the theme "NCWP Legacy: Women's Ascendancy in the Global Milieu" tomorrow, 9:30 a.m. at the Philippine Women's University, Taft Avenue, Manila. Among the guests are Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Australian Ambassador Ted Hely and Dr. Helena Benitez, NCWP past president and PWU chairperson. Highlights of the program are the launching of a comic strip publication on antiviolence against women and children, and the presentation of the Francisca Tirona Benitez Diamond Awards to NCWP past presidents.

Back to work for suspended principals

By Alcuin Papa

SEVEN HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN Taguig City who were suspended earlier were told to return to work yesterday by the Department of Education (DepEd).

DepEd Undersecretary for Legal and Legislative Affairs Franklin Sunga told the INQUIRER that the suspension of the principals by Taguig Division Officer in Charge Dr. Evelyn Villoria last Tuesday was "void."

Suspended were Dr. Eleonor Abisado of the Taguig National High School, Delfin Hernandez of the Bagumbayan National High School, Noemi Bayle of the Taguig Science High School, George Tizon of the Rene Cayetano Science and Technical High School, Guia de la Cruz of the Tipas National High School, and two other unidentified principals.

"The orders of Dr. Villoria were recalled and rescinded for being invalid. All of the principals can go back to their jobs," Sunga said. He added that Villoria did not have any basis for suspending the principals.

No power

"She has no power to suspend the principals. According to the Magna Carta for Teachers, a suspension can only be issued by the regional director or the secretary of education," Sunga said.

"But even then, a suspension is issued only when there is a formal charge against the teacher," he added.

No reason was given by Villoria for the principals' suspension, according to the DepEd official.

"The reason for the suspension was not stated. We had been trying to get in touch with Dr. Villoria to ask for an explanation. But we have not been able to reach her," he said.

Appointments

Sunga added that the DepEd had appointed Dr. Amancio Villamejor as Taguig division superintendent. Villamejor was the former Caloocan assistant division superintendent. Villoria, on the other hand, stays as Taguig assistant division chief.

Classes at the Taguig National High School were suspended earlier after some 100 teachers, students and some parents staged a rally calling for the ouster of Abisado on charges of corruption.

Staying put

Abisado had already been informed of her reassignment to another school. But she had insisted she was staying put at her post.

Abisado had dismissed the allegations as "baseless" and "politically motivated," adding that Taguig Mayor Freddie Tinga could have had a hand in demands for her ouster.

This, however, was denied by Ana Santos, Taguig public information office head.

"How could that be when the protesters were teachers and parents airing their grievances," she said.

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CIA's Somalia warlords ousted from last bastion

JOWHAR, SOMALIA—HARDLINE Islamic militia in Somalia Wednesday captured the last strongholds of a US-backed warlord alliance and vowed to establish Sharia courts, cementing a victory after more than four months of fighting, residents said.

Continuing their drive northward, columns of heavily armed militia aboard machine-gun equipped pick-up trucks—known as "technicals"—captured the towns of Jowhar, about 90 km north of capital Mogadishu, and Mahhadei Uen.

The Islamic militia captured the Mogadishu earlier this month.

Islamic courts chief Sheikh Shariff Sheikh Ahmed immediately imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew in Jowhar and told his fighters to shoot dead anybody found looting.

"We did not come here to earn money or claim power, but to make you safe and secure," he told a crowd of local residents as hundreds more Islamic fighters shouting "Allah Akbar"—"God is Great"—continued to enter town.

Doctors at local hospitals in both towns said eight people had been killed and around 20 wounded in the battles, with residents saying the toll was lower than previously feared since civilians had had time to take cover.

"We have captured Jowhar and we are now planning to establish a new administration and establish Sharia courts as soon as possible," said Sheikh Hassan Dir, one of the Islamic militia commanders.

In addition, the Islamists arrested two top alliance commanders, Hassan Bhisow and Osman Dheere, whom were later questioned.

By the time the curfew took effect, thousands of residents—many fearing reprisals—had returned to their homes, leaving the Islamic militia to patrol the township, an AFP correspondent said.

Residents said the Islamists, who now control a large part of Mogadishu, had been well-prepared to seize Jowhar from warlord Mohammed Dheere, a member of the US-backed Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT).

Dheere was reportedly in Ethiopia when Islamic militants entered Jowhar, host to a United Nations office and other international aid agencies working in the shattered African nation.

Most international staff were evacuated last week.

Meanwhile, the Somali transitional parliament—sitting in the regional Baidoa township—approved the deployment of peacekeepers, deepening rifts with the courts, whose fighters have vowed to kill foreign troops entering Somalia.

Several warlords had already fled Tuesday night ahead of the fighting. Mohamed Afrah Qanyare and Issa Botan Alin—who were pushed out of the capital early this month—and a little-known local chieftain, Abdu Nure Said, left Jowhar and headed further north to Qanyare's hometown in the central Somali region of Galgudud. *AFP*

MEMBERS of a Somali Islamic Court militia cradle their weapons in the Jowhar area after clashes with a coalition of warlords reported to be supported by the CIA June 14. REUTERS

NO PEACE PIPE SMOKER, THIS 'CHE'

This 1958 photo shows Argentine-born revolutionary figure Ernesto "Che" Guevara in Cuba Las Villas as he and Fidel Castro prepared for the revolution that toppled Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. June 14 marks the 78th anniversary of Guevara's birth. AFP

Multiple large-scale massacres in Darfur, war crimes court finds

UNITED NATIONS—THE CHIEF prosecutor of the International Criminal Court said Wednesday his office had documented multiple large-scale massacres and hundreds of rape cases in Sudan's war-torn Darfur region.

In a report to the UN Security Council, Luis Moreno-Ocampo said the office had documented "thousands of alleged direct killings of civilians by parties to the conflict," including "a significant number of large-scale massacres, with hundreds of victims in each incident."

Ocampo told the council that his office was investigating allegations that some of the groups implicated in the Darfur crimes "did so with specific genocidal intent."

He said identifying those with the greatest responsibility for the most serious crimes in Darfur was a key challenge for his probe but said he would not draw any conclusions pending the completion of a "full and impartial investigation."

He said the ICC would need the "full support of the Security Council and the unfettered cooperation of the international community, in particular the government of Sudan."

Ocampo said interviews of victims and witnesses reported that men perceived to be from the Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa ethnic groups were "deliberately targeted."

Evidence cited eyewitness accounts that "the perpetrators made statements reinforcing the targeted nature of the attacks, such as 'we will kill all the blacks' and 'we will drive you out of this land'."

The report also cited a "significant amount of information indicating that thousands of civilians have died since 2003" as a result of lack of shelter and basic necessities for survival after their homes and food stocks were destroyed and their property looted.

Ocampo's office also recorded "hundreds of alleged cases of rape," which the report said was indicative of an endemic practice among some groups involved in the conflict.

It highlighted a "widespread pattern of displacement of civilians, with recent estimates of some two million displaced persons and refugees from Darfur."

"Destruction of property and looting is a prevalent feature of the crimes in Darfur, with reports of destruction and looting in up to 2,000 villages throughout the three Darfur states," it said.

The study covering the October 2002-May 2006 period, also referred to continued reports of direct attacks on humanitarian workers and peacekeepers, including the killing of African Union peacekeepers in 2005 and 2006.

"These attacks are not only grave examples of the potential war crimes, they also have an impact on the delivery of vital services that exacerbates the suffering of the most vulnerable groups in Darfur," it said.

Meanwhile, Sudan's UN envoy Omar Manis said his government had set up a special criminal court to deal with the Darfur crimes.

But New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) said it was aware of only 13 cases that had been brought before that special court to date.

"The cases have involved low-ranking individuals accused of relatively minor offenses. No senior commanders or superiors have been charged for their part in the atrocities," HRW said. *AFP*

10 dead in Afghan bomb attack on workers

KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN—A powerful bomb tore apart a minibus carrying Afghan laborers to a US military base in on Thursday, killing about 10 amid growing violence before Nato takes over from US troops in the volatile south.

Three shops were destroyed and twisted metal and a large pool of blood covered the street at the scene of the attack which occurred during rush hour in the southern city of Kandahar, the heartland of the Taliban.

It was the latest incident in the worst wave of violence since US-led forces toppled the Taliban in in 2001.

"It was a big explosion. We don't know if the explosives were in the minibus or not," said a policeman at the scene, Raaz Mohammad. "We have seen more than 10 dead people with legs and hands blown off being brought out of the bus."

Kandahar police chief Azizullah Wardak said the blast was caused by explosives apparently hidden in the bus.

He said he knew of at least seven dead.

The bomb went off soon after the bus made a regular stop to buy bread at a bakery, before heading to Kandahar airport where US and international forces have a base, said baker Esmatullah.

Three shops were destroyed. Nervous shopkeepers cleared rubble from the street where a pool of blood and pieces of flesh lay.

Azizullah said the blast was the work of "Afghanistan's enemies," a term officials use to refer to the Taliban and their al-Qaida allies.

The Taliban claimed responsibility.

"It is our success. It shows that we have access to even highly guarded government places and we can do whatever we want," a Taliban commander, Mullah Hayat Khan, told Reuters. *Reuters*

Unchecked trade in ammunition fueling conflicts

LONDON—THE UNCHECKED trade in ammunition is fueling conflicts around the world, including in Iraq and Afghanistan, Oxfam International said Thursday.

"Figures show that export data exist for only 17 percent of the 10 to 14 billion bullets manufactured every year, leaving up to 10 billion rounds for which no reliable data exist," the British-based development charity said.

Its report showed that several big ammunition producers—including China, Egypt, Iran, Brazil, Bulgaria, Romania and Israel—provide no data at all on their ammunition exports, apart from shotgun cartridges.

The report, "Ammunition: The Fuel of Conflict," was published ahead of the UN conference on the small arms trade which begins in New York on June 26.

Oxfam director Barbara Stocking said in a statement that during the conference, "governments must agree new global principles to govern both the small arms and the ammunition trade."

The report argues that if bullet casings—which are often left at the scene of crimes and massacres—were properly marked, it would be far more likely that human rights abusers and criminals would be brought to justice.

Currently, markings only enable the manufacturer to be identified.

Oxfam's report outlined how illicit ammunition has flooded into war-torn countries like Iraq and Afghanistan as well as Somalia, Sierra Leone and Liberia in the last five years.

It said at least 76 countries manufacture ammunition, and the number is growing. Kenya and Turkey have both become producers in the last 10 years.

"Our research shows that new ammunition is widely available on Baghdad's black market," Stocking said.

"There are two likely explanations for this: Either it was smuggled in from neighboring countries or it has leaked from coalition or Iraqi forces' supplies," she said. *AFP*

Chinese laments lost 'kingdom of bicycles'

BEIJING—A SENIOR CHINESE OFficial has lashed out at the government's promotion of the car and is urging China to retain its former title as the "kingdom of bicycles," state media said Thursday.

"The explosive growth of motor vehicles has caused severe traffic jams in major Chinese cities and is posing a grave challenge to the country's energy security and urban development," Xinhua news agency quoted Vice Minister of Construction Qiu Baoxing as saying.

Qiu lashed out at municipal authorities for making it harder for cyclists to ride on city streets and demanded a halt to the transformation of biking lanes into roads for cars, the report said.

"While some Chinese cities are cutting back on bicycle lanes in order to make more room for cars, some Western cities are beginning to build more cycling paths," he said at a Wednesday conference on city planning and development.

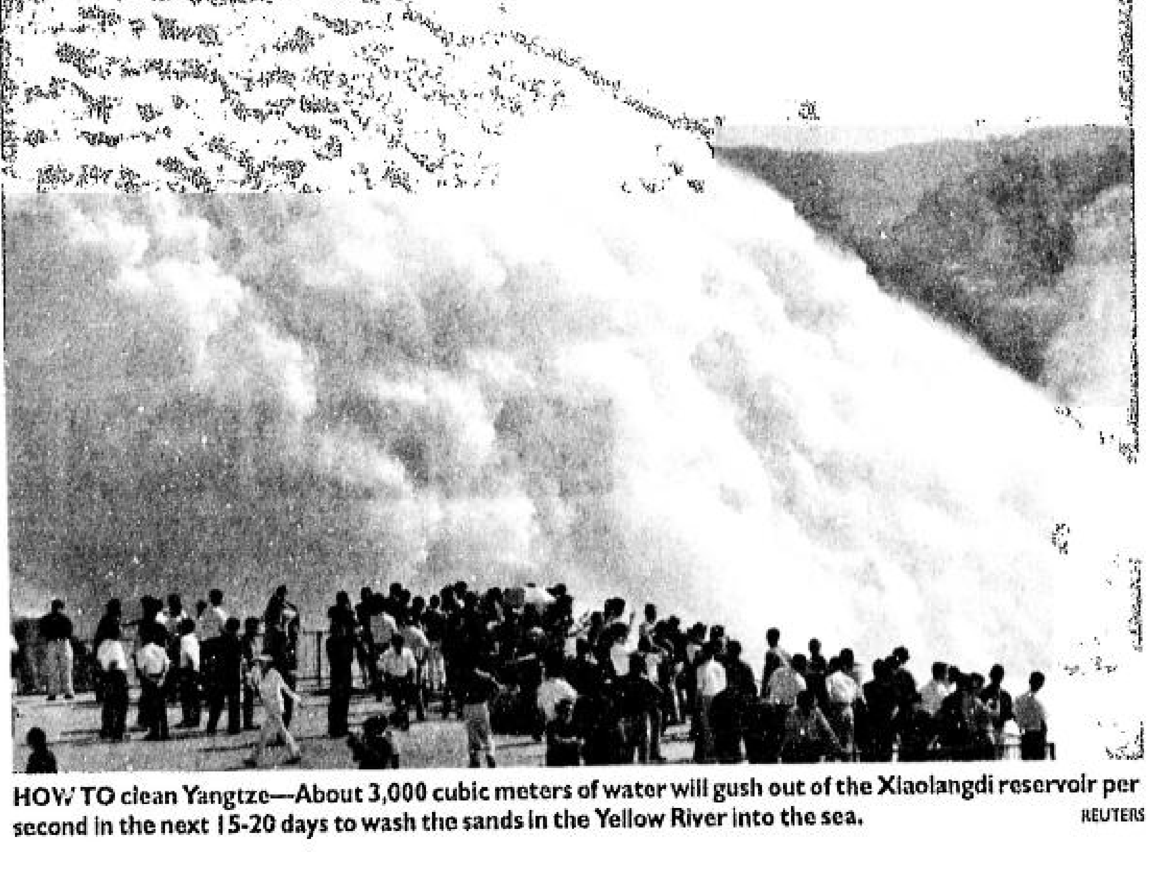
"The Ministry of Construction is firmly opposed to the elimination of bicycle lanes and has ordered cities to restore them."

The number of motor vehicles on China's roads rose 20 times between 1978 and 2004 and could increase five fold again by 2020, Qiu said.

In 2004 there were 27 million motor vehicles in the country and that number could reach 130 million in 15 years, he said.

China had up to 500 million cyclists on the roads in the early 1980s, a phenomenon that amazed the West and resulted in China being called the "kingdom of bicycles," he said.

But the number of cyclists had fallen as rapidly as private car ownership had risen, Qiu said. *AFP*



HOW TO clean Yangtze—About 3,000 cubic meters of water will gush out of the Xiaolangdi reservoir per second in the next 15-20 days to wash the sands in the Yellow River into the sea. REUTERS

Bush relieved top aide Rove is cleared

WASHINGTON — PRESIDENT Bush said on Wednesday that he "took a sigh of relief" when federal prosecutors decided this week not to indict Karl Rove, his top political adviser, in the CIA leak case.

But Bush, speaking with reporters in the Rose Garden, still faced tough questions about the investigation. One journalist asked if the president believed that Rove owed any apologies for providing "misleading" statements about his role in the case. Another asked, "Do you have any work to do to rebuild credibility that might have been lost?"

Bush dodged the questions.

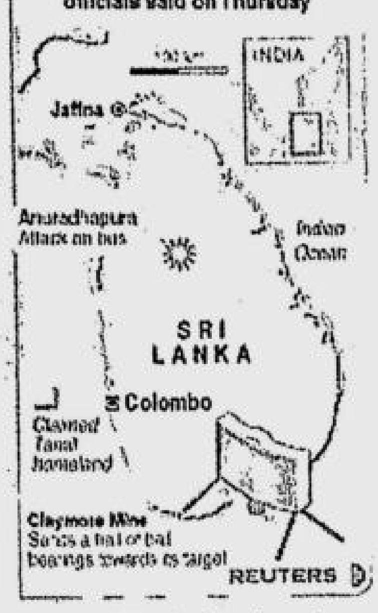
Certainly the decision by the lead prosecutor, Patrick J. Fitzgerald, not to indict Rove is a major break for the administration, cutting off an avenue of investigation that had come close to the Oval Office. But questions remain about how straightforward Rove, a deputy chief of staff, was about his own role in administration efforts to rebut a war critic—even with his own White House colleagues.

And there is still a trial looming for Vice President Dick Cheney's former chief of staff, I. Lewis Libby Jr., who is accused of lying to federal investigators who were trying to find out whether the White House intentionally disclosed the name of a CIA operative, Valerie Wilson, in an effort to undermine a war critic, her husband, former Ambassador Joseph C. Wilson. *NYT*

Land mine blast kills 64 in Sri Lanka

SRI LANKA ATTACK

Suspected Sri Lankan Tamil Tiger rebels killed 58 people in a claymore mine attack on a bus carrying civilian passengers, officials said on Thursday



Map of Sri Lanka locating mine attack site on Thursday.

COLOMBO—A LAND MINE ripped through a bus Thursday, killing 64 passengers and injuring 39 in the deadliest attack on civilians in Sri Lanka since a 2002 truce and sparking army shelling of Tamil rebel positions.

The military launched long-range artillery retaliation after blaming the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for the carnage in an ethnic Sinhalese district in the island's North-Central province.

The rebels denied involvement in the blast.

The spiraling violence renewed fears that the island is sliding back to war after peace broker Norway last week failed to arrange a face-to-face meeting between Colombo and the LTTE.

Policy Planning Minister Keheliya Rambukwella, the government's spokesperson on defense-related issues, said at least 58 people including two Buddhist monks were killed while another 45 escaped with injuries.

Hospital sources said six more people had died in hospital, raising to 64 the total number of dead.

The bus packed with villagers was heading to Kebitigollewa town when it was torn apart by the powerful blast.

Casualties were high as it was overcrowded with people travelling to a weekly market, Rambukwella said.

"This is a most barbaric terrorist act of the Tigers," he said, accusing the LTTE of carrying out the attack.

The separatists also condemned the blast.

"The LTTE condemns this attack on the civilian bus," they said in a statement. "Directly targeting civilians, as the Kebitigollewa Claymore attack has, cannot be justified under any circumstances."

Military spokesperson Prasad Samarasinghe said it was the worst attack against civilians since a February 2002 truce went into effect.

"We have no doubt that the attack is the work of the LTTE," he said. "No one else would do a thing like this."

He said the bus was hit by a Claymore mine, or a side charger, which overturned the vehicle and sent it crashing down the road for about 25 meters. Women and children were among the victims.

The attack took place in the district of Anuradhapura, 200 km north of Colombo.

Retaliatory shelling targeted rebel positions at Sampur in the eastern district of Trincomalee, military officials said, adding that they did not have details of any casualties or damage.

The military carried out air strikes on positions in the same area in April after a suicide bomb attack at army headquarters in Colombo.

A spate of recent bomb attacks have targeted security forces as well as civilians and have been officially blamed on Tamil Tiger guerrillas waging a campaign for independence.

Despite the truce, a surge in violence has left at least 720 people since December, according to official figures.

The land mine exploded a day after the Tamil Tigers said they had clashed with Sri Lankan soldiers who were allegedly laying mines deep within rebel-held territory further north in the island.

It follows the return to the island on Wednesday of leaders of the LTTE after planned talks in Oslo with Sri Lankan government officials failed to take place.

The rebels refused to sit at the table with a Sri Lankan delegation for what had been billed as two days of talks to discuss ways of ensuring the safety of Scandinavians monitoring the truce.

The government and the Tigers have accused each other of stepping up attacks despite the Norwegian-arranged truce that was the centerpiece of internationally backed peace efforts in the island.

Peace hopes all but vanished after Norway failed to bring the opposing parties to the table for two days of talks on June 8 and 9.

Diplomatic sources say Norway is now looking for an exit after spending six years attempting to broker peace in the island, where more than 60,000 people have been killed in three decades of fighting. *AFP*

PM Olmert says West Bank plan unstoppable

PARIS—PRIME MINISTER EHUD Olmert said on Wednesday his plans to set Israel's borders unilaterally were irreversible, but he still hoped to negotiate a deal with the Palestinians.

Olmert is visiting France and Britain to promote his "realignment plan," under which dozens of Jewish settlements in the West Bank would be removed and others annexed behind a fortified border on land the Palestinians say is theirs.

"The realignment plan is unstoppable. It is unpreventable. It will be implemented," Olmert told reporters after his first meeting with French President Jacques Chirac.

"I hope it can be carried out within the framework of talks, but it will be carried out with or without talks," he said of the plan, which would see Israel take chunks of land where Palestinians want a state.

Britain and France have stressed the need for a negotiated deal rather than a unilateral move and French officials quoted Chirac as telling Olmert that this was "an absolute priority."

However, Olmert told reporters he believed his plan was gaining credence. "Recognition of the unpreventability of the realignment plan has been enhanced."

The Europeans are among the patrons of a peace "road map" and in the past have opposed Israeli unilateralism. Palestinians fear Olmert's plan will deprive them of viable statehood in the West Bank. Israel quit Gaza last year.

Olmert said negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority were "central" to his agenda and he told French television he expected to meet Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas "at the end of June or the beginning of July."

"I want to meet Abu Mazen (Abbas), I really believe he does not want terrorism ... I am ready to take enormous risks to make peace with Abu Mazen," he told the TF1 channel.

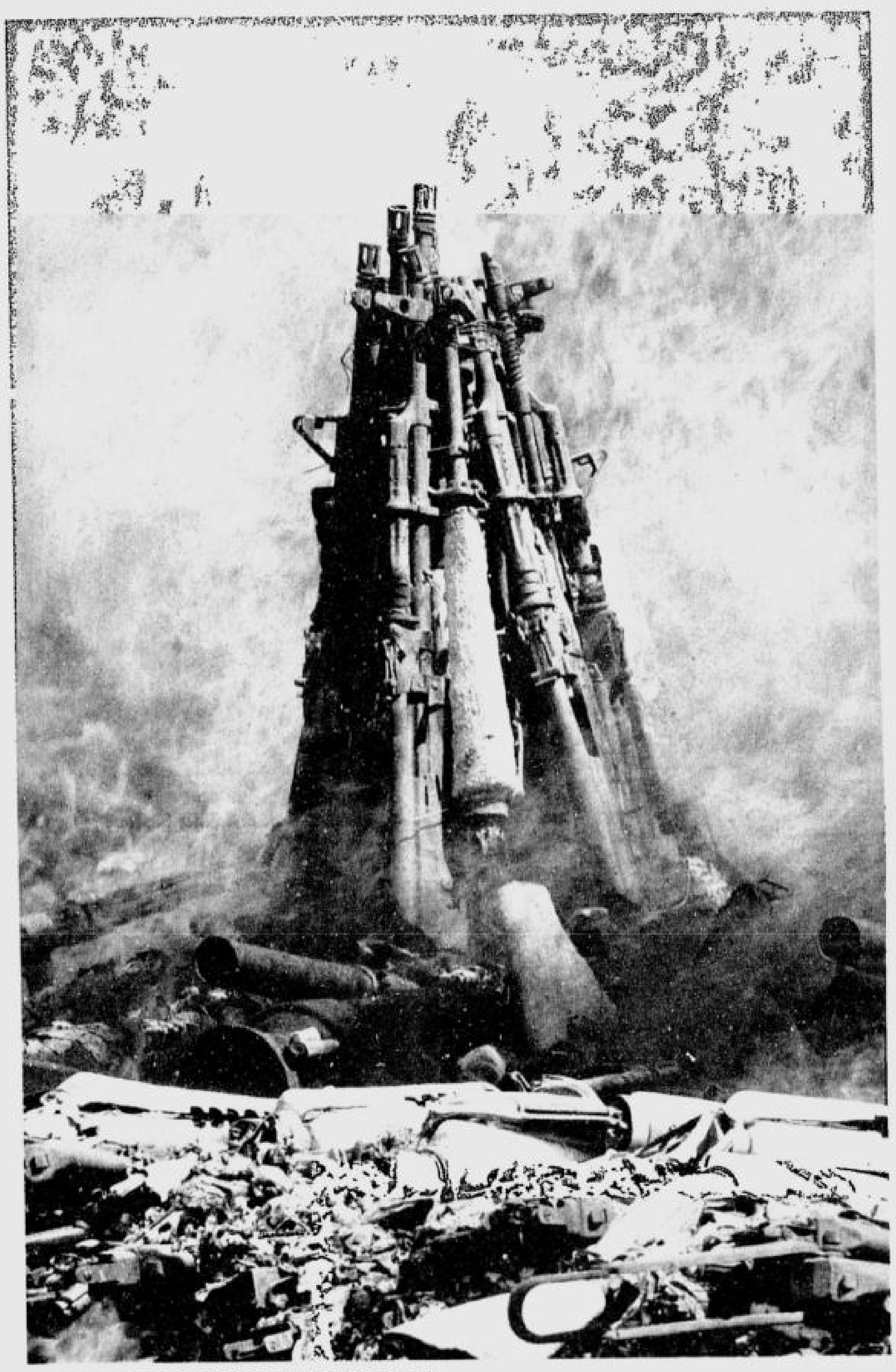
However, he ruled out formal negotiations until the new Palestinian government under Hamas Islamists renounced violence, accepted past peace accords, and recognized Israel.

An Israeli official quoted Chirac as telling Olmert: "These conditions are not subject to negotiation and no one should have any doubt about this."

Hamas has so far rejected the trio of preconditions.

As top European Union powers, Britain and France have played supporting roles in navigating a tattered "road map" to ending a more than 5-year-old Palestinian revolt. They have also led Western bids to curb Iran's atomic ambitions through diplomacy.

Olmert was quoted as saying that his stance on Iran "was absolutely identical to the president's (Chirac's) position." *Reuters*



A FIRE THAN CAN BE CALLED GOOD

Arms are ablaze during a weapon destruction ceremony at a stadium in Kampong Thom, a province 168 km north of Phnom Penh, June 15. The Cambodian government regularly destroys illegal weapons.

REUTERS

E. Timor probe may reach to PM

DILI—A UNITED NATIONS-backed criminal probe into violence that killed at least 21 in East Timor may reach all the way to Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, one of the investigation team said Thursday.

A UN team of special prosecutors has begun working with Dili's independent prosecutor-general Longuinhos Monteiro on the probe, which one member said would look into several separate incidents along with allegations of gang violence linked to Alkatiri.

"We have to investigate deeply and find out who are those exactly involved in the violence. No one will be spared," one of the prosecutors, Antonio Osorio, told AFP when asked if allegations against Alkatiri would be examined.

"We are now discussing with Mr. Monteiro what and how many cases we have and then we are conducting the investigations," he said.

The team of prosecutors was announced Tuesday in Dili by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's representative to East Timor Sukehiro Hasegawa.

Findings of the group are to be forwarded to an independent inquiry commission ordered by Annan.

Hasegawa has said that the decision whether to investigate the allegations against Alkatiri rested with East Timor's chief prosecutor Monteiro.

"I am confident that the justice system will prevail, because without justice, the people's confidence will not be regained," he said.

A senior aide to Alkatiri on Thursday reiterated that the prime minister was open "to any impartial investigation. He has nothing to hide."

"He has said before that he is not guilty of these accusations," the aide said. *AFP*

$1B lost to phony claims for 'Katrina,' 'Rita' losses

WASHINGTON—ROUGHLY 16 percent of aid payments for victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita were based on bogus claims or spent on questionable items like diamond rings and sex videos, a government watchdog agency told Congress on Wednesday.

About $1 billion was lost to fraudulent and improper claims, Government Accountability Office investigators told a House of Representatives Homeland Security subcommittee.

Money went to people who did not live at damaged property, used false property addresses or made duplicate claims, they said in a report to the panel. The estimate is based on an examination of 247 of the 2.6 million emergency aid claims totaling more than $6 billion.

"We believe our estimate understates the magnitude of the problem because it includes only issues related to the application process," GAO investigator Gregory Kutz said in testimony to the committee.

The FEMA money was intended to help hurricane victims pay for food, clothes, housing and other essentials. But some recipients used it to make questionable purchases such as a diamond ring and other jewelry worth $3,700 at a shop in Arlington, Texas, the GAO said.

Another recipient bought a one-week Caribbean vacation for $2,200, the GAO said. Other questionable purchases included a $200 bottle of Dom Perignon champagne at a Hooters restaurant in San Antonio, Texas, and $300 for Girls Gone Wild sex videos, the report said.

FEMA also paid millions to hundreds of state and federal prisoners, Kutz said. *Reuters*

Islamic extremists misguided, says Bashir

SOLO, INDONESIA—A FIREbrand Indonesian cleric who served time for his role in the 2002 Bali bombings has reportedly called Islamic extremists "misguided" holy warriors, as Australia's prime minister called on Thursday for him to be monitored.

Abu Bakar Bashir returned to the Muslim boarding school he founded in Central Java's Solo late Wednesday after he was released from his maximum-security prison in Jakarta at the end of a nearly 26-month term.

Speaking to reporters amid a throng of ardent supporters who greeted him at the Al-Mukmin school, Bashir said alleged terror chief Noordin Mohammad Top and his followers should revise their violent methods.

"I would say that they are misguided mujahideen (holy warriors). Fighting using bombs or weapons in a peaceful zone is forbidden," Bashir said according to the Detikcom online news agency.

"So I hope they will review their methods. Hopefully there will not be any more violence in the future. All this time they have chosen the wrong way," the alleged leader of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) regional extremist group said.

JI has been blamed for a string of deadly blasts in Indonesia.

Nevertheless, the cleric reportedly said the militants deserved to be called holy warriors because their intention was to defend Islam. *AFP*

Iraq conflict fuels rise in number of global refugees to 12M

ANTIWAR activist Angela Kelly rests her hand on a flag-draped coffin representing the 2,500 US soldiers who have died in Iraq during a protest in front of the White House June 14.

AFP

WASHINGTON—THE GLOBAL refugee population has begun to rise for the first time in four years, largely due to instability in Iraq, a US group said in a survey, which saw refugee protection deteriorating by all measures.

The number of refugees and asylum seekers increased to 12 million in 2005 from 11.5 million a year earlier, according to "World Refugee Survey 2006" of the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), a nonprofit group tracking the problem worldwide.

The survey counted 644,500 more Iraqi refugees in Jordan and Syria in 2005 and indicated a "more significant outflow" in the future.

"The deteriorating situation in Iraq has led to the refugee outflow some predicted at the onset of the war, which has only now materialized," the USCRI said.

Over 40 percent of Iraqi professionals have fled the insurgency-wracked nation since the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, it said.

Syria now hosts 351,000 Iraqi refugees and has the largest population of Iraqi Shiite Muslims outside Iraq, while Jordan hosts 450,000 Iraqi refugees, many of whom are Christian minorities, according to the report.

It said that the Middle East and Africa continued to host the largest number of refugees, and that eight million or two-thirds of the world's refugees remained "warehoused" or deprived of basic human rights as enshrined in the UN Refugee Convention for five years or more.

Neither Jordan nor Syria, said the report, recognized the UN's call for temporary protection of refugees and "both refuse entry to many new arrivals.

"We are concerned that protection for Iraqis is deteriorating," USCRI President Lavinia Limon said.

"Syria has begun to require residency authorization so many refugees are forced to live underground. Jordan is not granting refugee status to Iraqis and refusing entry to many," Limon said.

USCRI anticipates even "a more significant outflow" of Iraqi refugees in the near future, based on Baghdad's issuance of two million passports over the last 10 months.

According to the survey, the global refugee population began to fall after hitting 14.9 million in 2001 but showed an uptrend again last year.

USCRI's 12 million global refugee figure for 2005 was far higher than the 8.4 million cited by the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) last week.

The UNHCR had said that the number of refugees who fled their homeland dropped to its lowest level in almost three decades last year, adding however that there was an alarming rise in the total displaced within their own country. *AFP*

Iran quietly told of penalties in deal

PARIS—WHEN AN INCENTIVES PACKAGE BY SIX NATIONS to encourage Iran to curb its nuclear program was presented in writing in Tehran last week, it omitted a long list of potential punishments should Iran reject it, according to senior officials familiar with the package.

Instead, it was left to Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief, to deliver news about the sticks—only orally.

In a one-on-one meeting without aides, Solana told Ali Larijani, the chief Iranian negotiator, that there would be "serious consequences" against Iran in the UN Security Council if Iran did not suspend key nuclear activities and embrace the offer, the officials added.

The decision to focus on the benefits for Iran and to leave no paper trail about possible penalties reflects a new international negotiating strategy toward Iran.

The six nations—the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany—have decided to treat Iran not as an errant child whose behavior must be modified or a rogue state that must be punished, but as a potential responsible negotiating partner.

The possible punishments were kept separate and informal for two reasons: To prevent Iran from rejecting the offer out of hand and to maintain the fragile unity of the six nations that authored it, officials said.

"In the past, we were told we didn't have enough respect" for the Iranians, one senior official said. "Maybe we're learning, and this time our approach was different, more respectful."

The strategy also reflects the recent shift in the policy of the Bush administration. It follows a decision last month by the administration to sit at the same negotiating table with Iran—if Iran fully suspended its uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities.

Iran had rejected a previous proposal presented by France, Britain and Germany. This time, the United States, Russia and China are full partners in the negotiations, with all six nations apparently determined to give Iran a package so generous that it would have no reason to say no.

The disclosure that the formal written proposal omitted sanctions came to light after extracts were published Wednesday by Agence France-Presse. The text was read to The New York Times by an official.

One key goal of the offer, according to the text, is "to develop relations and cooperation with Iran based on mutual respect," the first time the Bush administration has indicated that it is prepared to deal with Iran in such a positive way.

The proposal includes such technical inducements as international commitments to support joint projects with Tehran for building new light water reactors to make electricity.

The offer lays out two ways that Tehran could fuel such reactors. The first alternative would have Iran participate in an "international facility" in Russia that would enrich uranium, an idea that Tehran has consistently rejected. The second would have Iran draw on a commercial supply of nuclear fuel that the International Atomic Energy Agency would supervise and that would act as a "buffer stock" lasting for up to five years. *NYT*

A BABY flamingo hatched at the Columbus Zoo, near Powell, Ohio, is guided back to its nest by its parents June 14. The birds live to be about 60 years old. AP

Death of girl takes Indonesia bird flu toll to 38

JAKARTA, INDONESIA—A 7-YEAR-OLD GIRL who died in Indonesia earlier this month was suffering from bird flu, international tests have confirmed, bringing the country's death toll from the virus to at least 38.

The girl's brother also died showing symptoms of the virus, but was buried before tests were taken, the health ministry said earlier this month.

Nyoman Kandun, a senior health ministry official, said Thursday tests from Hong Kong had confirmed the girl was positive for the deadly H5N1 strain of the virus.

Indonesia trails only Vietnam, where 42 people have died, in human bird flu deaths and the H5N1 virus is considered endemic in poultry in most provinces across the sprawling archipelago.

Health officials have expressed concern over the possible transmission of among humans after several members of the same family contracted the illness on Sumatra.

The World Bank this week said Indonesia's efforts to stop H5N1's spread are underfunded.

Indonesia has said it will need US$900 million (euro710 million) over the next three years to fight the virus, but has only budgeted US$59 million (euro46 million) for 2006.

Bird flu has killed at least 128 people worldwide since it started ravaging Asian poultry farms in late 2003.

So far, most human cases have been linked to contact with infected birds, but experts fear the virus could mutate into a form more easily transmissible among humans, potentially sparking a pandemic that could kill millions worldwide. *AP*

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SPORTS

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Harbour forces deciding Game 5

By Jasmine W. Payo

GAME TOMORROW
(Olivarez Sports Centre)
3 p.m.—Toyota Otis vs Harbour Centre

HARBOUR CENTRE IS NOT all LA Tenorio and Joseph Yeo, after all.

With backup playmaker Chico Lanete pumping in 20 points, the Portmasters repulsed the Toyota Otis Sparks, 73-55, yesterday and forced a deciding Game 5 in the PBL Unity Cup Finals at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque.

Lanete teamed up with the Portmasters' substitutes to give Harbour a 17-point lead at the half, 39-22, then scored nine points in a critical stretch in the final period that moved his team beyond recall, 69-50.

"Our defense was great," said Harbour Centre coach Jorge Gallent. "We started well and ended well. Whatever we did right today, we have to do again in Game 5."

The decider is set at 3 p.m. tomorrow, also at the Olivarez Sports Center.

Tenorio remained superb in the series, delivering nine of his 16 markers in the second half. And while Yeo admitted his shooting was off, the Harbour ace still proved a factor with eight rebounds, four assists and two steals.

The Portmasters shone on both ends of the court that they hardly felt the impact of Joe Devance's biggest game in the series. Devance, the Most Valuable Player of the conference, finally asserted himself with 16 points and 13 rebounds.

The Sparks also missed starting forward Aaron Aban, who sprained his wrist in Game 3.

Led by Devance, the Sparks rallied from 43-25 to move within 48-40 on a JV Casio shot. But Toyota Otis couldn't get any closer than that.

From a 58-48 lead, the Portmasters uncorked an 11-2 rally with Lanete scoring six points for a 19-point bubble, 69-50, with only 2:20 left.

With the Harbour Centre stars on the bench, the Portmasters' second unit led by Lanete outscored the Sparks, 15-4, at the start of the second quarter to grab a 31-15 lead.

The scores:

HARBOUR CENTRE 73—Lanete 20, Tenorio 15, Alonzo 8, Reyes 7, Chia 6, Maierhofer 5, Arana 5, Gaco 5, Dy 1, Yeo 1, Coching 0.

TOYOTA OTIS 55—Devance 16, Aldave 8, Alcaraz 6, Bautista 6, Casio 5, Fajardo 3, Daa 3, Andaya 2, Rodriguez 2, Coronel 2, Larong 2, Oreta 0, Cabahug 0.

Quarters: 16-11, 39-22, 50-40, 73-55

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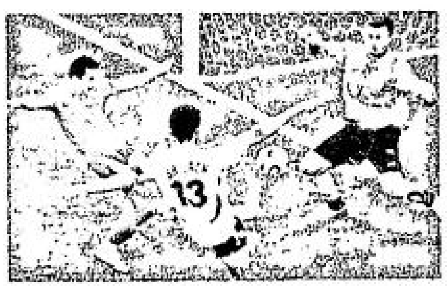

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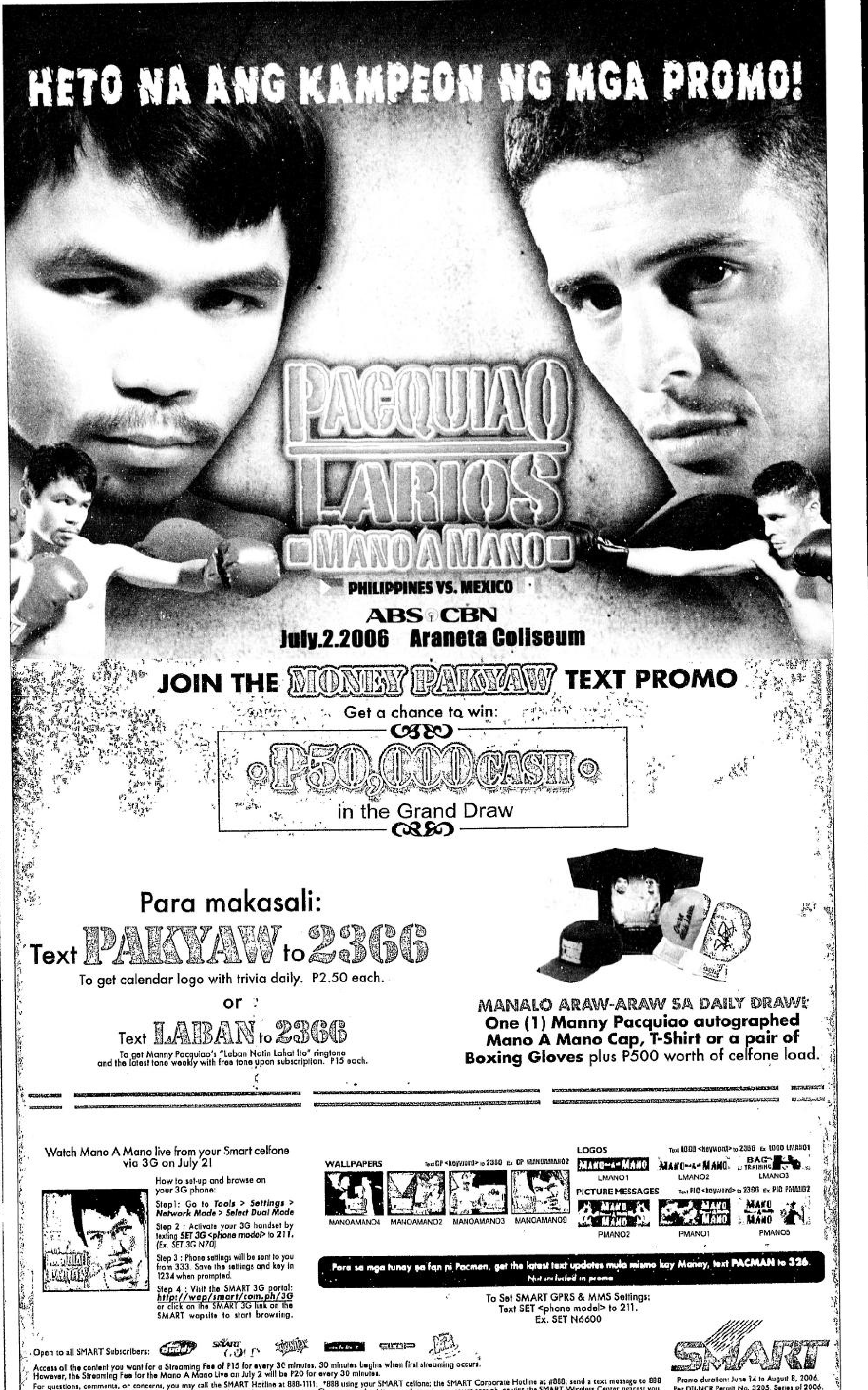

HETO NA ANG KAMPEON NG MGA PROMO!
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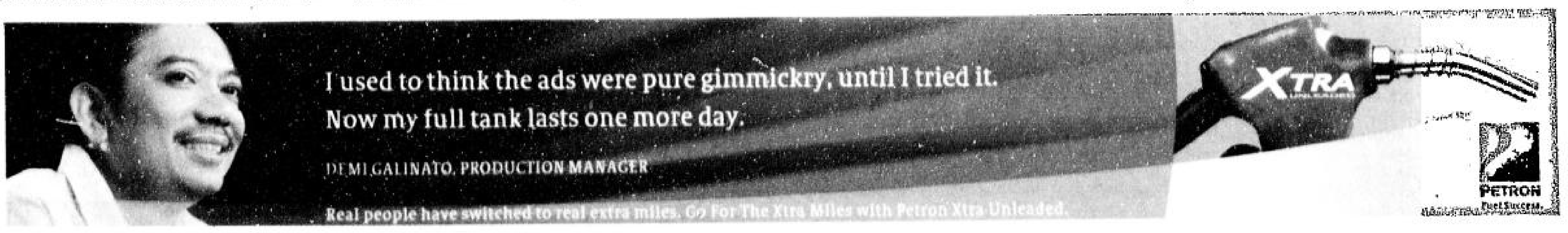

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DEMI GALINATO, PRODUCTION MANAGER

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Bulls, Kings KO showdown today

WITH THEIR SEASON ON THE LINE, Red Bull and Barangay Ginebra dispute the last quarterfinal slot today in the Gran Matador Brandy-PBA Philippine Cup at the Ynares Center in Antipolo.

The Bulls forged a deciding game in the best-of-five series after walloping the defending champion Kings on Wednesday.

Red Bull will go into the 7 p.m. game with an edge in manpower despite losing point guard Celino Cruz to a league ruling regarding technical fouls.

Cruz was automatically slapped a one-game suspension for shouting something which referee Luisito "Boy" Cruz said was obscene.

Red Bull beat Ginebra in their last KO match—Game 7 of the Fiesta Cup semifinals early this year.

"My feeling is that experience and bench depth will be our advantage going into Game 5," Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao had said after the 118-97 Game 4 victory. "But this is the time when Ginebra is most dangerous."

GAME TODAY (*Ynares Center*)
7 p.m.—Red Bull vs Barangay Ginebra

Ginebra has been coming up with surprising performances one after the other, getting this far despite a lineup severely decimated by injuries to key personnel.

And the Gin Kings will come into the game no strangers to pressure. They also won a do-or-die game close to two weeks back—against Air21, another complete team—to make this round.

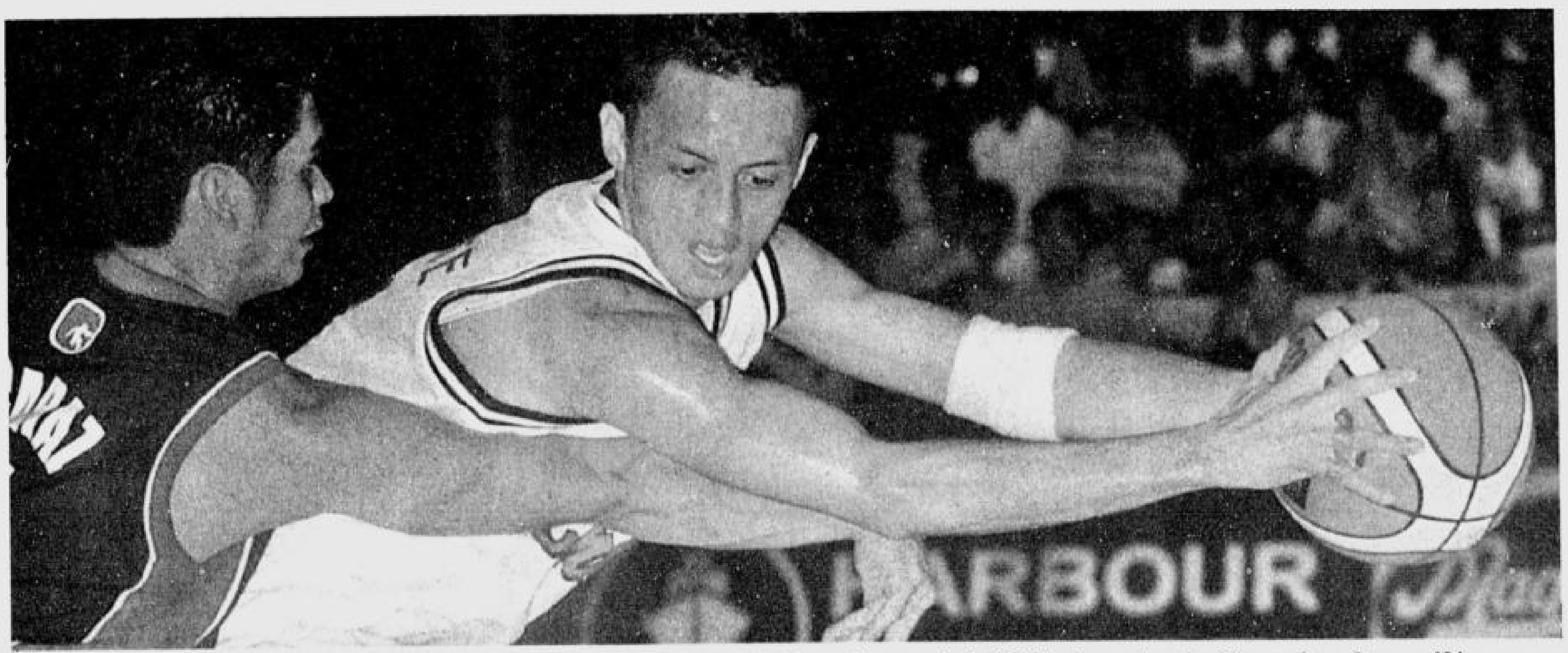
That's why more than battling them physically, the Game 4 win, where the Bulls set season-highs in quarter scoring, halftime total and game total, could have deflated the Kings' collective egos in time for tonight.

So dominant were the Bulls on Wednesday that their 35 points in the first period and their 60 halftime points were the most by any team this year. They completed their mastery of the Kings by leading by as many as 35 points at one stage and by not allowing Ginebra to slice the gap fewer than 20 in the entire second half.

Worth watching are the matchups between Eric Menk and Enrico Villanueva in the paint, Mark Caguioa and Cyrus Baguio in the off-guard spot and Topex Robinson and Egay Echavez at the backcourt.

But just like in Game 4, the Bulls vowed not to concentrate too much on the Kings' prolific players and instead try to limit those who could unexpectedly contribute.

"We don't want to focus too much on either Menk or Caguioa," said Villanueva. "We'll just run our system and try to quicken the pace. I hope we could come out with the same intensity on Friday (today)."



HARBOUR Centre top scorer Chico Lanete (right) maneuvers off Toyota Otis's JP Alcaraz in yesterday's PBL Finals match at the Olivares Gym. *Story on A31.* ERIK ARAZAS

300 game for Poblete in Boysen Int'l Open

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FORMER NATIONAL TEAM MAINSTAY RICHIE Poblete rolled a perfect game—the 15th in his career—as he gained on the leaders in the men's Open Masters Wednesday night in the 35th PBC-Boysen International Open Tenpin Bowling Championships at the Green Valley.

The 31-year-old Poblete, who comes from a family of bowlers, scored 300 in his second game en route to a four-game series of 933, which was a pin behind JC Tupaz among the Filipinos in the fold. He stood sixth overall in the Masters lineup behind four Koreans and Tupaz.

Poblete is the youngest of eight siblings of architect Ricardo Poblete, a former Philippine Bowling Congress president, and current Philippine Women's Bowling Association head Margie Poblete. His brothers, former RP Team members Charlie and Riffy, have also scored perfect games.

"The conditions just felt so good," said Poblete, who left the national team five years ago and now works with the magazine Architect's Cope.

Poblete said he felt very good as he continued to have good lines after a 214 first game.

He rolled 269 and 210 after his perfect game that gave him a share of the P100,000 prize that will be divided among the elite 300 scorers.

The perfect gamers include former World Cup champion CJ Suarez and Southeast Asian Games women's Masters gold winner Liza Clutario.

Four-day leader Tyrone Ongpauco slid to ninth place as the Masters qualifying came to a close Thursday night. Making it to the Masters opening block on Friday night are the top 14 local, top 12 foreign, top 11 mixed pool and three top scorers from the Desperado pool.

Suarez stood 14th among the locals with 942.

Malaysia's Wendy Chai jumped on top in the women's side, finally overhauling Clutario with 949 pinfalls. Cecilia Yap, a former Asian Games champion, climbed to third place with 922.

Asia's top female player Shalin Zulfikli barged into the mixed pool with an 884 aggregate, while Asia's No. 2 Choy Poh Lai, also of Malaysia, clinched sixth place with 883.

Larios not a bit fazed by Pacquiao

BACK IN MEXICO, HE USED TO HELP BUILD houses as a carpenter when he was not yet trading leathers for a living.

He admitted at one point, he even didn't have some place to cook. Today, he is ready to travel to a virtual lion's den to carve yet another masterpiece.

No doubt, Mexico's Oscar "Chololo" Larios is going into the biggest and most dangerous fight of his life when he crossed the t's for his July 2 showdown with Filipino boxing icon Manny Pacquiao.

Pacquiao is known not only for his reflexes and power, but also for a big heart.

Larios, however, is not fazed one bit, and vows that he will not only finish credibly, but will upset the Filipino hero.

In an interview in Japan by ABS-CBN's Dyan Castillejo, Larios vowed to shame Pacquiao in front of his rabid fans, as he plans to draw strength from his pregnant wife, children and a brotherly coach.

Larios, in the interview, said that his wife is three months pregnant, and every time his kids call him up from Mexico, all the pain in training turns into strength that he will store to unleash on Pacquiao.

For several days now, Larios has been holed up in a gymnasium in Tokyo, sparring against World Boxing Council bantamweight champion Hozumi Hasegawa and world-ranked Toshiaki Nishioka, both southpaws like Pacquiao. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

LARIOS

NIKE
CHAMPION
JUNIORS DIVISION

THE UE Warriors celebrate their classy triumph.

Warriors clinch Fr. Martin Cup

AFTER BARELY MAKING IT TO THE finals, University of the East trounced surprise finalist San Sebastian College Cavite-Recoletos, 80-71, recently to capture the Father Martin's Cup-Nike Summer League champipionship.

"Winning the championship definitely boosted the team's confidence for the coming UAAP wars," said UE coach Dindo Pumaren. "More importantly, the tournament gave us the opportunity to match up against very competitive collegiate teams."

From 22-all, the Warriors went to gunners Mark Borboran, Marcy Arellano and sophomore James Martinez, who gave UE a 46-38 lead at the half.

Borboran paced the Warriors with 17 points along with eight rebounds. Arellano and Bon-Bon Custodio combined for 31 points as the Warriors went ahead by as much as 13 points late in the fourth quarter.

The Far Eastern Lady Tamaraws clobbered the Adamson University Lady Falcons for the women's crown, while San Sebastian-Manila survived a late surge by San Beda to emerge Junior champion.

The scores:

UE 80—Borboran 17, Custodio 16, Arellano 15, Martinez 11, Gregorio 9, Bandaying 7, Lingganay 3, Llagas 2, Espiritu 2, Canizares 2, Briones 1, Labagala 0.

SSC-CAVITE 71—Bolocon 15, Yee 13, Magdadaro 12, Gracilla 11, Cenita 11, Panes 3, Villaver 2, Moconocido 1, Basa 0.

Quarters: 22-22, 46-38, 65-53, 80-71

SPORTSWATCH

BAP's Lina, Caidic main Scoop guests

BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION OF THE Philippines president Joey Lina and Barangay Ginebra team manager Allan Caidic lead the guests in today's session of the Sports Communicators Organization of the Philippines (Scoop) forum starting at 10:30 a.m. at the Kamayan Padre Faura. Also appearing in the Accel-sponsored weekly forum aired live over dzSR Sports Radio 914 are Robert Evangelista, head of the Manila team which will compete in the Big League World Series in Michigan, and NCAA commissioners Tonyboy Liao, Elias Lao, Jimmy Samogod and Nonoy Unso.

Dog training trials today in Marikina

THE PHILIPPINES WILL TAKE PART in the Mondio Ring, an international dog sporting event in Europe later this year. In preparation for the prestigious event, the Philippine Mondio Ring Association (PMRA) will hold the second of its quarterly trials starting today at the Marikina Sports Park. The 2-day trials will be officiated by internationally-certified judges and decoys led by renowned French judge Calude Dopp. The trials will be shown on IBC13 in the first week of July. The PMRA is the local representative of the Groupe de Travail Internationale Mondio Ring, the governing body of the Mondio Ring system based in Belgium.

Sultan GAB boxer of the month

NEWLY-CROWNED PAN-ASIA BOXING Association (PABA) welterweight champion Dondon Sultan has been chosen by the Games and Amusements Board as its Boxer of the Month. Sultan earned the award following his big first-round stoppage of previously unbeaten Anton Solopov in Surgut, Russia, on May 20. Also cited by the GAB is runner-up Malcolm Tuñacao, the OPBF bantam king, for his successful titular defense over Japan's Yasuo Kijima last May 6. Tuñacao is rated no. 4 by the World Boxing Council.

80 fights sizzle in Pasay 5-cocker

MEMBERS OF THE PASAY COCKPIT Cockers Association (PCCA) figure in a showdown with their counterparts from the National Cockers Association (NCA) today in a big 5-cock derby at the Pasay City Cockpit. The 80-fight program is sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. The derby, hosted by the NCA Agilawin Group, features prominent derby regulars like Rep. Iggy Arroyo, Rep. Gerry "Boy" Espina, Gov. Ito Ynares, Jet Fernando, Jun Jingco, Arman Santos, Ruel Ricafort, Pol Estrellado, Benjie Lim, Patrick Antonio, Gerry Ramos, Pepito Ngo, Tony Tan, Efren Canlas, Lito Orillaza and William Co, among others. For inquiries on other forthcoming derbies at the venue, call 843-1890, 843-1746 or 816-6750.

UBBA derby set July 1 in San Juan

A PRIZE POT OF P200,000 IS AT stake in the United Backyard Breeders Association (UBBA) 3-cock derby to be held in cooperation with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 on July 1 at the San Juan Coliseum. The UBBA's second promotion at SJC has so far lured 60 entries. Meanwhile, the venue's Fastest Win—One-Cock Ulutan resumes tomorrow with about 100 participants seeing action. Sam Mendoza, a former operator of Cainta Coliseum, and Ronnie Lacsina are hosting the event. Entry fee is P2,000.

Don Exequiel seeks a piece of racing history

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

BASED ON HIS MOST RECENT PERFORMANCE and purely on form, Don Exequiel, a handsome chestnut colt by Bench Mark out of Belle Epoque, looms as the hot favorite to win this Sunday's JV Ongpin Cup, second leg of the 2006 Triple Crown Series, at the Santa Ana Park.

His upset victory over a star-studded cast in the Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. Cup, opening leg of the TC races last May 28 at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite, has clearly boosted his stock as the horse most likely to win again and sweep the country's most prestigious event for three-year-olds.

A far fourth choice at the tote board the last time, Don Exequiel, ridden smartly by jockey Ronald Baldonido, finished with flourish, winning the 1,600-meter race in 1 minute 41 seconds flat, just two seconds off the record time set by stablemate Real Spicy, who won last year's third leg of the TC races.

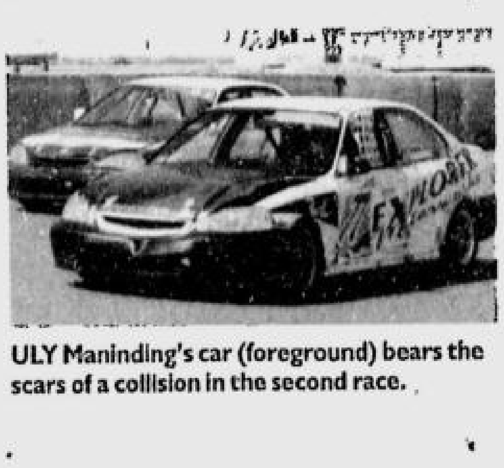
"He's (Don Exequiel) in good shape now," said jubilant trainer Joji Panlilio of the powerhouse Hermie Esguerra stable.

Ten horses have been nominated for this Sunday's Ongpin Cup, which will be longer at 1,800 meters. Among the other entries to reckon with are Special Edition, Jet Sutter, Tigres in Action, Million Dollar, Dixie d' Younger and up-and-coming Hard to Find.

Held under the auspices of the Philippine Racing Commission chaired by retired Gen. Florencio Fianza, the major prizes at stake are: P1.2 million for first; P450,000 second; P250,000 third; and P100,000 fourth. The breeder of the winning horse gets P120,000.

* * *

HERE AND THERE: Playing true to form, pre-tournament favorites Brazil, Argentina, England and host Germany won their early matches in the eagerly awaited World Cup of football played in several German cities. South Korea, a surprise semifinalist in the 2002 World Cup, also won to keep Asia's hopes alive in the month-long series after another Asian team, Japan, lost to Australia… A million thanks to reader Malou Fernandez of Suterville Subdivision, Zamboanga City, for her kind and inspiring words. A sports lover, particularly basketball, Malou's favorite player is Alvin Patrimonio. Don't worry. Rest assured that in due time I will honor your request to write about Alvin and his family… Newly appointed Presidential Assistant on Youth and Sports and Manila Sports Council chair Arnold "Ali" Atienza is a young man on the go. A former Asian taekwondo champion, the 33-year-old Ali is considered by many as a worthy successor to his sports-minded father, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza. Like his father, Ali is also active in conducting charity missions in the depressed areas of the city… My sources say Jayjay Helterbrand is suiting up for Barangay Ginebra when the Kings play Red Bull in Game 5 tonight at the Ynares Sports Center in Antipolo City. Helterbrand has been sidelined for days following a hip injury but he is keen on returning to the playing court… For this year's PBA Philippine Cup, I agree with the experts' view that it will be a wide-open race. It will be anybody's game in the semifinal series between Purefoods and Alaska, ditto with San Miguel Beer and the winner of tonight's do-or-die encounter between Red Bull and Barangay Ginebra… In his book, "A Complete Guide to Sports Injuries," noted American author H. Winter Griffith, M.D., wrote that if an athlete suffers a particularly serious injury, one of the most important aspects of a speedy and appropriate recovery is having a positive mental attitude… Kudos to sportsman-businessman Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla, president of the National Basketball Conference (NBC), and Parañaque Vice Mayor Anjo Yllana for helping the youth get into sports by sending multi-titled Spring Cooking Oil to Bahrain to play in the 4th Bahrain-Philippines Goodwill Games on June 15-18. The back-to-back PICAA Open champion, Spring will be coached by Efren "Yong" Garcia, mentor of the front-running Cooking Oil Masters in the northern division of the Guerrero Brandy-NBC national championship.



ULY Maninding's car (foreground) bears the scars of a collision in the second race.

Maninding tops Touring Car 3rd round

RISING STAR ULY MANINDING USED A QUICK start to rule Round 3 of the San Mig Coffee-Petron Blaze Cup Philippine Touring Car Championship recently at the Subic International Raceway.

The 19-year-old Maninding, also a reigning slalom and autocross champion, overtook pole winner Matteo Guidicelli at the first turn and won the race pulling away.

"This trophy is truly inspiring, the victory more than made up for all my frustrations from a disastrous kickoff leg," said Maninding, who is backed by Explorer Motors inc., College of St. Catherine, Subic Montessori, Aim High Transport, Alberto Racing, Rayban and CSS Image Design.

Runner-up Guidicelli checked in four seconds behind while Jeff Borja ended third overall.

Maninding, despite spinning out in one crucial lap of the afternoon race, finished second behind Guidicelli, but was shortly stripped of it after he was found to have driven two kilos underweight.

Clavecilla sets up last-day shootout with pal Gaston

By Musong R. Castillo

SILANG, CAVITE—IGGY CLAVECILLA AND Francis Gaston, close friends and longtime mainstays of the former powerhouse Luisita golf squad, scrambled well enough yesterday to set up a final-round shootout for the 2006 Philippine Seniors Amateur golf championship today.

Clavecilla, the reigning Asia-Pacific individual champion, fired a one-over-par 72 and Gaston carded a 73 as they broke away from the field which couldn't solve the riddle of The Riviera's tough Langer course here.

Counting his opening 78 on Wednesday, Clavecilla totaled 150 for a one-shot lead over Gaston, the former RP Am and Senior champ, who bogeyed the 18th.

Rolly Viray all but kissed his title-retention bid goodbye, ballooning to an 86 that left him 20 strokes down with 170 going into the final day of the 54-hole event presented by Harbour Centre.

Clavecilla started out slow and actually yielded the lead to Gaston after a double bogey on No. 6 and a bogey on No. 9. Gaston was working on a one-over card after a birdie on the 16th before he missed the last green for his third bogey.

"It's going to be a good fight in the final round (today)," Clavecilla said. "The key is not to let Francis take control, because if he does, it would be difficult for me to catch up."

Seve Roxas Chua shot a 77 for third overall, 10 shots behind, while club bet Joe Lao struggled to an 83 to drop to fourth, another three shots back.

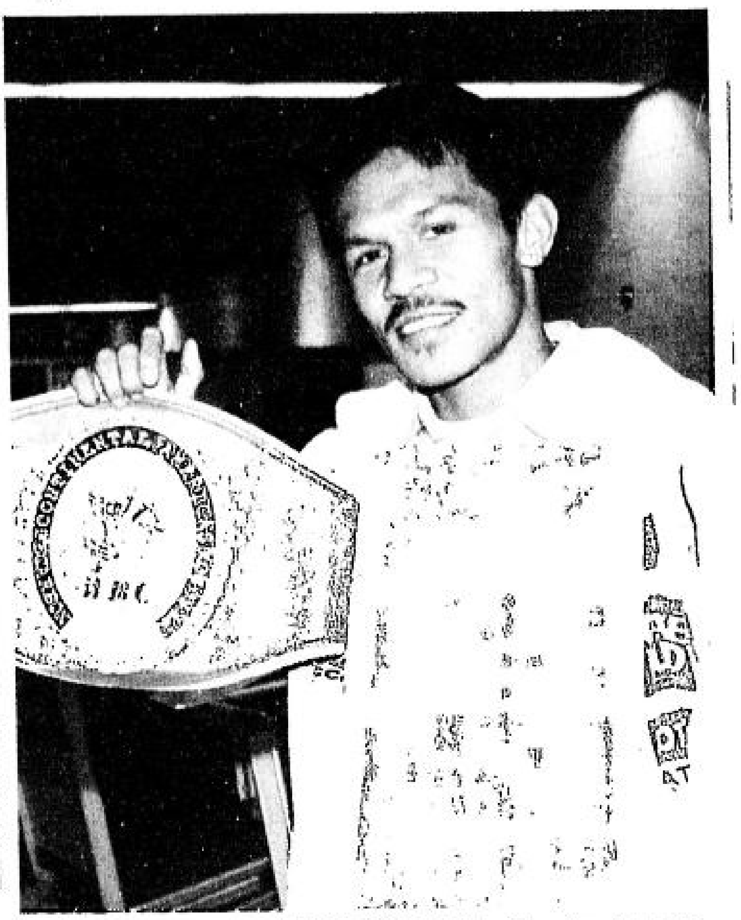
Ted Runes hopes to turn a two-shot lead over Tommy Joson III into victory today. He shot a 77 in Category I reserved for players aged 55 to 59. Former senator Tito Sotto will tee off six shots behind Runes after an 83 on Wednesday.

Tito Eusebio was the Category II leader (60-64) after shooting an 82. NGAP president Leandro Mendoza was second with an 84.

Ben Liclican showed the way in Category III (65-69) with an 85 for a two-stroke lead over Danny Sarmiento (87). Ricardo Quintos and Rodolfo Feliciano shared the lead in Super Senior I (70-74) with identical 92s, while Carlos Iñigo made a 98 to post a 10-stroke lead over former President Fidel V. Ramos (108).

POC Olympic golfest slated

THE COUNTRY'S TOP AMATEURS AND LOW HANDicappers will vie for top honors in the first Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) Festival golf tournament on June 20-21 at Villamor Golf Club in Pasay City. The 36-hole tournament, organized by the National Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP), serves as part of the celebration of the inaugural staging of the Olympic Festival, the POC's own version of the national games held in conjunction with the worldwide celebration of the Olympic movement. Top honors will be disputed in Class A (0-9 handicap), Class B (10-18) and Class C (19 and above) for men, women's division (0-10), and the senior division for players 55 years and older. For inquiries, call NGAP at 525-6987, 524-5160, 853-4978 or 853-4979.



SWEET THE SECOND TIME AROUND: Bobby Pacquiao shows his champion's belt on his arrival at the NAIA from Los Angeles yesterday. Pacquiao, younger brother of boxing icon Manny, knocked out American Kevin Kelley at the Madison Square Garden in New York on his first defense of his World Boxing Council (WBC) Continental Americas super featherweight crown. JESS YUSON

Lascuña opens 3-shot lead in rich PGAP event

TAGAYTAY CITY—ANTONIO LASCUÑA FIRED a second straight 3-under-par 69 Wednesday to zoom to a three-stroke lead halfway through the P1 million PGAP Tournament presented by Jesus P. Bustamante Jr. at scenic Splendido course.

Lascuña, a member of the national coaching staff and former winner of the rich The Country Club Invitational, had four birdies against a bogey in chilly conditions for a 138 total.

Ruben Sasutil assembled a 67, the same card of veteran Benjie Magada, for 141, a stroke ahead of solo fourth placer Mars Pucay, who followed up an opening 68 with a 74 for 142.

Robert Pactolerin shot a 71 for 144, good for a fifth-place tie with Richard Sinfuego (72) and two ahead of Melvin Eso.

Only 30 players made the halfway cut in the 72-hole event that offers P300,000 to the winner. The tourney is mainly sponsored by JP Golf Korea and backed by Kim Hyoung-min.

Artemio Murakami, just two off the pace overnight, floundered with a 77 and stood 10 shots back at 148, the same total of Cassius Casas, who shot a 70 after a 78 Tuesday.

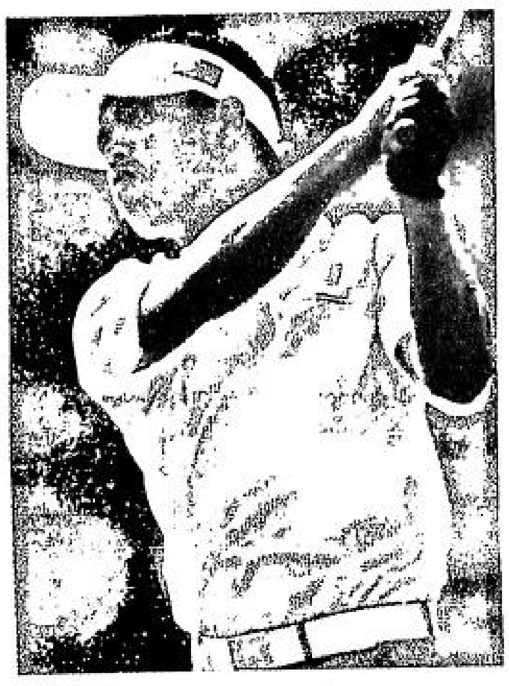
Nat'l drag races slated at BRC tomorrow

A FIELD OF AT LEAST 70 DRIVERS ARE vying for various titles in the 2006 Red Horse National Drag Racing Championship tomorrow at the drag strip of the Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario, Batangas.

The drivers, led by new record-holder Jonathan Tiu of Team ERE, have been revving up in their quest for supremacy in the races sponsored by Red Horse Beer and San Miguel Corp. and supported by Pilipinas Shell, Denso, Yokohama, Casino Filipino and Sparco.

Tiu drove his Mitsubishi Evo5 in a stunning 11.309 seconds in the premiere Quick 8 class in the previous races.

BRC drag race director Fil Gulfin said participants may register until 8:30 a.m. Saturday. The races start at 9:30 a.m. For inquiries, call (632) 817-2241, 729-5365 or fax 815-1241 for details.



FLAWLESS: Six birdies for Jay Bayron JUN RAPANAN

SAMSUNG TOUR

Bayron fires ace, record 64 at Palos Verdes

DAVAO—A FLAWLESS, COURSE-RECORD round with a hole-in-one to boot.

That was how national team standout and Davao native Jay Bayron tore the Rancho Palos Verdes course apart yesterday, scoring a bogey-free eight-under-par 64 for a hefty seven-stroke lead in the third leg of the Samsung Amateur Tour here.

Teeing off on the 10th, the 27-year-old Bayron exploded with six birdies, three on each nine, but it was a fantastic 6-iron on the par-3 No. 2 that found the hole that highlighted the best round ever made at the Palos Verdes course.

It bettered by two strokes the 66 established by local pro Ramil Bisera in the second round of the now-defunct First Gentleman's Circuit three years ago.

Bayron's sizzling start left Ferdie Aunzo, who turned in the only other sub-par round for the day, a far second with his 71.

There was a five-man logjam at 72 made up of Mike Bibat, Gene Bondoc, Mark Fernando, Boboy Jaraula and Miko Yee in the tournament sponsored chiefly by Samsung and co-sponsored by Taylor Made, C-Lium Fibre, Microtel, Titleist, Custom Clubmakers/KZG and Sunbolt. Media partners are Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9 and 99.5 RT.

Joseph Labajo (73) and Louie Dacudao (74) were in the eighth and ninth places while Jay's brother Rufino and Miko Alejandro were among five players at 75, making the race for the 10 championship slots in the final two rounds tight.

The record round of Bayron, a member of the ICTSI team training under Bong Lopez, also made up for the non-appearance of Jayvie Agojo, who was supposed to compete in ladies Class A.

PSMG head Boy Blue Ocampo said that Agojo withdrew at the last minute for health reasons.

Bayron got going with a birdie on the second hole, went to two under on the 15th and picked up a third birdie on the 17th for a 33 going out. After a birdie on the par-5 first, he hit an ace on the second hole and made another birdie on the third to go seven under with still six holes to go.

He settled for pars on the next five holes before canning his sixth and final birdie on his last hole.

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Gunman kills two WC fans

BANGKOK—THAI POLICE SAID THURSDAY they were hunting for a gunman who shot dead two noisy World Cup fans at point blank range at a restaurant after they ignored his request to be quiet.

The gunman was sitting next to a group of 10 Thai football fans who watched Monday's Italy-Ghana match on TV at the restaurant in the popular seaside resort of Pattaya, 70 kilometers (45 miles) southeast of Bangkok.

The fans went wild when Italy scored a goal against Ghana in the match broadcast in Thailand in the early hours of Tuesday, and an argument broke out when the gunman asked them to be quiet.

"The gunman came alone and he could not fight against all the 10 people. So he used his gun to kill the victims," Pattaya police major Somphol Nakkhamphan said, adding that the victims were aged at 30 and 41.

"We know the suspect and are searching for him," he said.

Pattaya is a beach resort town popular among Western tourists and known for its thriving nightlife and red-light district. *AFP*

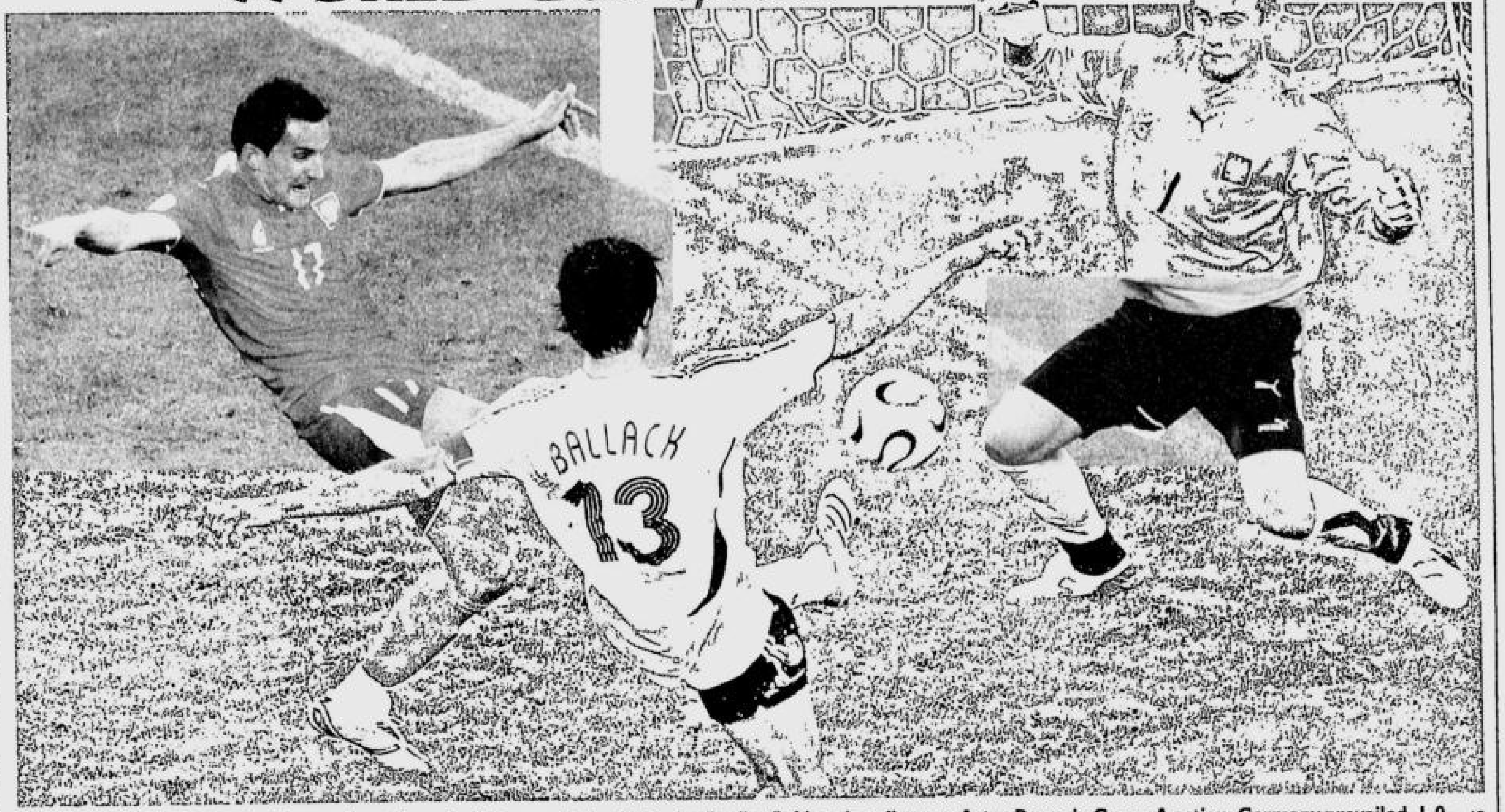
Al Jaber joins Pele in elite scorers' group

MUNICH—SAUDI ARABIAN STRIKER Sami al Jaber joined an elite group of players that include Pele and Diego Maradona when he scored against Tunisia on Wednesday.

His goal in his team's 2-2 draw with Tunisia came 12 years after his first goal in the World Cup finals against Morocco in 1994 and he has now joined Pele, Uwe Seeler, Diego Maradona and Michael Laudrup as the only players who have scored World Cup goal 12 years after their maiden goal.

Henrik Larsson of Sweden can also join this elite list if he scores for Sweden against Paraguay on Thursday.

Pele's goals spanned the years 1958-70, Seeler's 1958-70, Maradona's 1982-94 and Laudrup's 1986-98. *Reuters*



GERMANY'S Michael Ballack (center) gets in a shot between Poland's Darius Dudka (left) and goalkeeper Artur Boruc in Group A action. Germany prevailed, 1-0. AP

Germany secures 2nd round slot; Spain shows fiery form

BERLIN—HOST GERMANY CHEERED ITS FANS AS IT ALL BUT ENSURED its place in the second round of the World Cup after an injury-time winner by super sub Oliver Neuville gave it a 1-0 victory over Poland.

Its place in the last 16 will be confirmed if Costa Rica fail to beat Ecuador on Thursday while Poland—the first European team Germany has beaten at a major finals since the Czech Republic in the Euro 96 final—look set to exit the finals even earlier in terms of days than in 2002—six to 10.

Elsewhere, Spain sounded a warning that at last it might match its reputation with action on the pitch as it trounced its major Group H rivals Ukraine 4-0—David Villa scoring a brace—while the Ukrainians had a man sent off.

The other match of the day, the last in the first set of first round matches, will not be remembered for much more than that as Tunisia and Saudi Arabia fought out a 2-2 draw enlivened simply by two late goals.

One of them by Sami Al-Jaber lifted the Saudi legend to an elite group of players—along with Pele and Uwe Seeler—to have scored at World Cups 12 years apart.

The draw meant that not only are Tunisia still waiting for its first win at the global extravaganza but also its coach Roger Lemerre, who was in charge of France's disastrous defense of its title four years ago.

The Germans looked to have run out of time as the game entered injury-time having wasted several chances through Polish-born strikers Miroslav Klose and Lukas Podolski and then seeing Neuville and Michael Ballack hit the bar.

However, a fatal lapse in the up to then outstanding Polish defense—whose side had been reduced to 10 men 15 minutes from time—saw Neuville nip in and score at the death and further frank coach Jurgen Klinsmann's decision to recall the 33-year-old veteran in March as he took his total to four goals since he came back.

Ballack said the team deserved a pat on the back for its persistence.

"It was a good performance by the team as we kept on putting them under pressure. We controlled the game well in the first half and produced a number of chances," said the 29-year-old captain.

"The fact we got a late goal may seem lucky, but it was wholly deserved." Neuville said that he was not a hero, merely the man who had made up for an earlier bad miss.

"Thank God it worked out as I got an important goal a minute before the end." German coach Jurgen Klinsmann said his side had done him proud.

"I am proud of the team, the way they kept trying to force the goal.

"The result was thoroughly deserved as we kept our rhythm and our tempo.

"In the end, with our opponents down to 10 men, we chased after the goal with all our might and it paid off," said Klinsmann, who like the coach of the 1990 World Cup winning team Franz Beckenbauer is chasing the accolade of winning the trophy both as a player and coach.

Spain was ruthless against a Ukranian side that seemed out of place and overwhelmed by the fact it was at the World Cup finals.

Spain's 67-year-old coach Luis Aragones took great comfort from the victory, not just because it was against a team wearing his least favorite color yellow.

"We have extremely talented players in Spain and we're only just starting to use the right strategy to play well in the big competitions," said Aragones. *AFP*

Zico vows to boost Japan's attack

BONN—JAPAN COACH ZICO, UNDER pressure following the 1-3 loss to Australia, vowed Wednesday to boost the Asian champions' attack to survive the World Cup first-round cut and salvage his reputation.

"While sitting on the edge of a cliff, we must think how to give all we have," Zico said as his "Blue Samurai" squad resumed full team training here after the disastrous World Cup opener on Monday. "We are not out of it yet." In their second Group-F match against Croatia on Sunday, he plans to boost his midfield by employing his favorite four-man last line which can free up two side backs to join four midfielders in pressing the opponents.

"I will add one more to our midfield. It is the best measure for a must-win match," he said.

Zico's cautious three-back defense, joined by two wingers, pushed Japan far too deep and allowed the big and physical Socceroos space to charge in on goal resulting in a three-goal onslaught in the last nine minutes of play.

ZICO: WE are not out of it yet.

Croatia, third at France 1998, lost their opener 1-0 to five-time champions Brazil on Tuesday with Kaka scoring the sole goal. A second straight loss would likely prove fatal for both teams.

"We must score goals against Croatia and never concede any to them," said Zico, a star player of Brazil's three World Cups.

About the Brazil-Croatia match, Zico praised Croatia for putting up a "close fight" against his home country.

"Indeed, Croatia charged back hard. If Kaka was with Croatia, Croatia would have won," he quipped.

Bolton midfielder Hidetoshi Nakata, Japan's most famous football export, said the Croatians "could have won the match."

"I still believe we have a chance to beat Croatia. We just try to get the best out of ourselves. That's it."

"We have nothing to lose. We have no choice but to clash with them," said goalkeeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi, who also played in Japan's 1-0 loss to Croatia when it made a winless World Cup finals debut in 1998.

"They are well organized but they don't have outstanding stars any more." The same shift in Japan's defensive pattern already paid off at the Confederations Cup in Germany a year ago. *AFP*

POLAND goalkeeper Artur Boruc forlorn after the Poles' losing effort against the Germans. AP

Hooligans fight police; 300 nabbed

DORTMUND, GERMANY—Five days of opening World Cup calm ended with a volley of bottles and chairs as dozens of German hooligans clashed with police Wednesday before their country's pivotal win over Poland.

WC ON SPORTSPLUS
12 a.m.—Tunisia vs S. Arabia
1 p.m.—Germany vs Poland
9 p.m.—Ecuador vs Costa Rica

For much of the day, German police worked with their counterparts from neighboring Poland to identify and arrest traveling troublemakers without incident. It was homegrown hooligans who lashed out about two hours before the late evening kickoff after police confronted them in a central square.

By the time rain began falling after midnight, police said they had arrested 240 German hooligans—at least 120 in the central square—and 60 Polish hooligans.

The threat of fan violence had been a theme ahead of the month-long soccer tournament. To head off trouble, authorities across Europe confiscated passports of known troublemakers, increased border patrols and drew up extensive policing plans for the dozen game cities.

While much of the focus was on the English, Dutch and Polish, some German officials worried about thugs who wouldn't have to travel.

"What gives me headaches sometimes is thinking about how we are going to keep our own 10,000 hooligans in line," Michael Endler, who heads Germany's office for sports information, warned before the competition.

Tranquility in World Cup-hosting cities had allayed much of the fear over widespread hooliganism at soccer's biggest event and even surprised police who had braced for the worst.

The trouble began Wednesday when police spotted about 40 men, later described as hardcore hooligans, and blocked the route between the outdoor area where they sat drinking and a nearby big screen where games are shown for free.

As police began apprehending the men they screamed, "We are Germans, too. We want to go to the big screen," according to witness Cristel Lorenz. *AP*

SAUDI Arabia's Khaled Aziz (front) and Tunisia's Riadh Bouazizi go for the ball during their Group H match which ended at 2-2. AP

Jaidi header gives Tunisia 2-2 draw vs Saudi Arabia

MUNICH, GERMANY—RAHDI JAIDI scored the equalizing goal in injury time Wednesday to help Tunisia hold Saudi Arabia to a 2-2 draw in Group H of the World Cup.

Jaidi headed in Ziad Jaziri's cross from 10 meters (yards) only minutes after Sami al-Jaber had given Saudi Arabia the lead.

Al-Jaber, a 34-year-old veteran, picked up a through ball and slotted it past Tunisia goalkeeper Ali Boumnijel with his first touch in the 84th minute.

Al-Jaber, who came on as a substitute in the 82nd minute, has now scored in three World Cups. He also scored in 1994 and 1998, but failed to find the net in 2002.

Tunisia took the lead in the 23rd minute when the Saudi defense failed to clear a corner and Jaziri dropped his left shoulder and sent the ball hard into the top-left corner of the net.

Saudi Arabia slowly recovered its poise, and midfielder Nawaf al-Temyat was at the center of the team's increasingly dangerous moves.

The Saudis won a string of free kicks and corners, and Tunisia's 40-year-old goalkeeper had to dive sharply to stop a free kick from Redha Takar in the 37th that was curling toward the left post.

The Saudis finally struck back with a smooth passing move in the 57th. Noor Mohammed got away from Tunisia defender David Jemmali down the right and crossed for Yasser al-Qahtani to clip the ball past Boumnijel at the near post.

Both teams now have one point in Group H. Earlier Wednesday, Spain beat Ukraine, 4-0, in the other group match. *AP*

Nadal finds his feet on grass; Roddick avoids fall

LONDON—SPAIN'S WORLD CUP football warriors have inspired double French Open champion Rafael Nadal to his first grass victory after a year off the surface.

The top seed at Queen's club took to the court with perfect timing after Spain polished off a 4-0 win over Ukraine Wednesday.

With little ceremony and just a few hours of training on the surface since arriving in London on Monday evening, Nadal ripped into the third round with a win over American Mardy Fish 7-6 (7/1), 6-1.

"I'm serious about this, it was a very important victory for me," said the world number 2. "It was a nice surprise.

"Fish is tough, he has a very good serve, he's difficult to play on grass."

The Challenger title that 86th-ranked American won at the weekend in Surbiton counted for little as Nadal's raw talent prevailed.

The 20-year-old last planted his feet on the lawns in a Wimbledon second-round loss last summer to Gilles Muller.

Nadal improved his 2006 record to 36-3 with five titles; he is riding a 25 match win streak since losing to good friend Carlos Moya in Miami last March.

Second-seeded Roland Garros semi-finalist Ivan Ljubicic rolled over Romanian Razvan Sabau 7-6 (8/6), 6-2 to reach the third round after the bye given to the top eight seeds.

Holder Andy Roddick took an unsteady step toward a fourth consecutive title here as he battled past inspired Canadian qualifier Frank Dancevic 2-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Roddick's first match of the season on grass was marked by early struggle as the world number 127 Dancevic, playing his fifth match on the surface since last weekend, broke twice to claim the opening set.

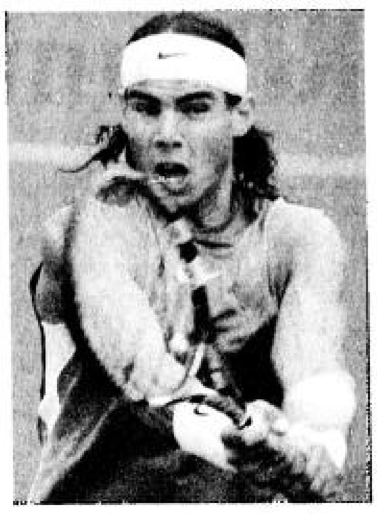
It took all of third seed Roddick's pool of experience to finally put things right, emerging with a narrow win after missing on nine break point chances in the one-hour, 25-minute contest.

Victory lifted Roddick, without a title since last October and not even a final to show for in 2006, to an impressive 16-1 mark at Queen's, the top Wimbledon tuneup.

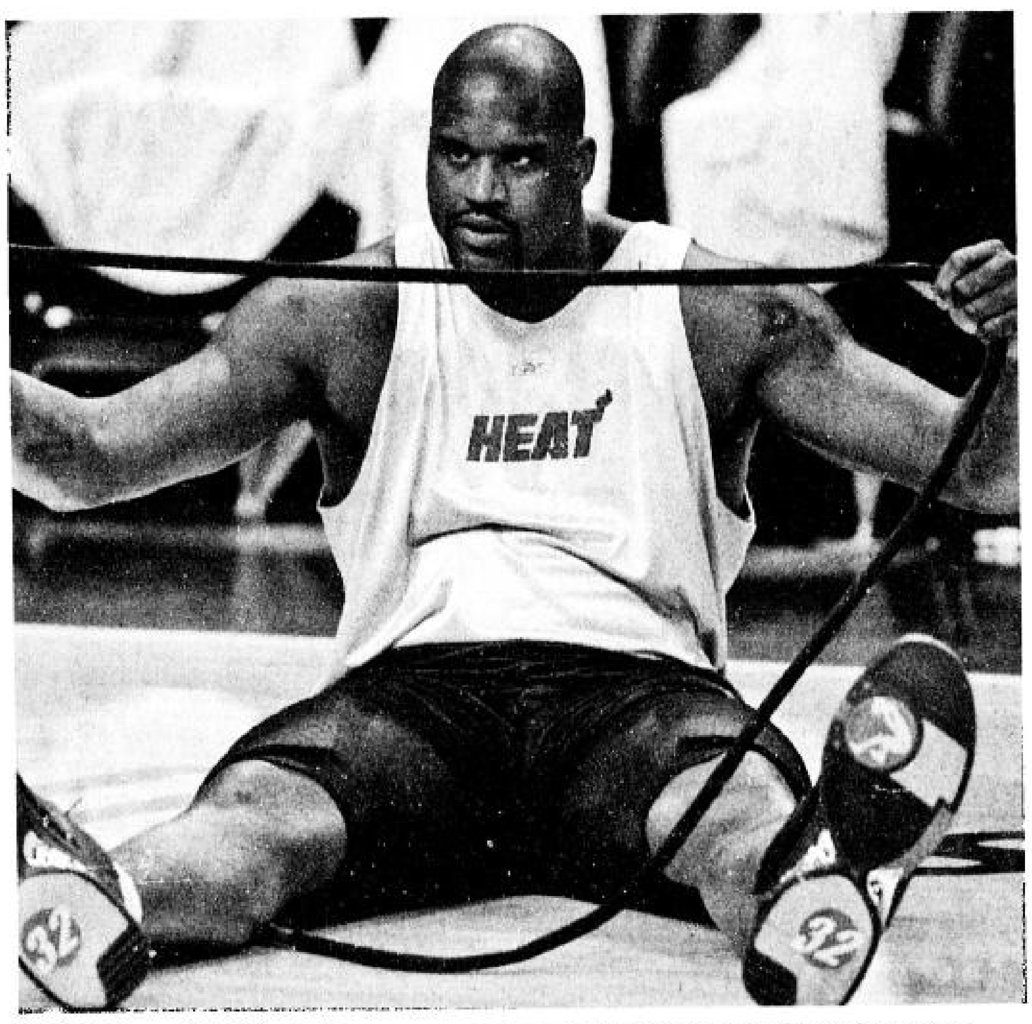
Home fans were served up a distasteful defeat around lunchtime on the lawns as British tyro Andy Murray crashed out to Serb Janko Tipsarevic 7-6 (7/3), 3-6, 6-2 in a match interrupted with Murray leading 5-2 in the second set on Tuesday.

A year ago, the 19-year-old Scot made his big-match breakthrough here.

But without a coach for two months, Murray has won only two recent matches and failed to thrill the local public on a grey day. *AFP*



NADAL: Not only good for clay.



HEAT'S Shaquille O'Neal holds up a rope during practice for Game 4 of their NBA Finals against the Mavericks. REUTERS

MAVERICKS' Dirk Nowitzki hones his shooting REUTERS

Heat hoping to keep fire versus Mavs

MIAMI—FAVORING A STIFF LEFT KNEE, DWYANE WADE HOBBLED to the yellow maintenance cart and slipped onto its flatbed. He propped himself up against the front seat and settled back for the short ride to the Miami Heat's locker room.

"Can I drive?" Wade asked. "I always wanted to drive one of these things."

Sorry, not today, he was told.

Wade's request will have to wait. Right now, the only significant driving the Heat want to see from their flashy guard is toward the basket.

One day after salvaging Miami's season with a 42-point, 13-rebound performance in Game 3 of the NBA finals against the Dallas Mavericks, Wade spent Wednesday getting treatment on his aching left knee, which he injured when teammate Shaquille O'Neal accidentally fell into his leg.

"I was a little nervous about it this morning," Wade said, gingerly running his fingers across the black tights over his knee. "But I'm going to try and go. Hopefully I can be 100 percent."

Hope isn't enough in these parts. Considering the stakes in Game 4, prayer may be required of the Heat faithful.

Although he wasn't at full speed late in Tuesday's game, Wade brought his team back from the edge of almost certain extinction by scoring 15 points—12 over the final 6:34—in the fourth quarter to rally Miami from a 13-point hole and pull the Heat to 2-1 down in the best-of-seven series.

According to the league, it was the second largest fourth-quarter comeback in finals history, and, it was the latest testament to Wade's soaring status as one of the game's best clutch players.

"He's just fabulous," O'Neal said. "He's a great one. And he's so young with a lot of room to improve. It's going to be fun to watch him."

Wade evoked the usual comparisons to Michael Jordan, a parallel he's not comfortable with at all.

"No one should be compared to MJ, man," he said. "There will only ever be one MJ. That's it. I'm not him."

Wade ignored foul trouble and soreness seeping into his knee to bring the Heat "back from the dead to win," as coach Pat Riley put it.

Wade's virtual one-man show—his 42 points were the most since Allen Iverson scored 48 and O'Neal 44 in Game 1 of the 2001 finals—was aided by Dallas' inexplicable collapse down the stretch.

Perhaps too giddy at the prospect of taking a 3-0 lead in the series, the Mavericks, so dominant in Games 1 and 2, went 2-of-7 from the field, committed five turnovers and were outscored 22-7 over the final 6:15. *AP*

Madayaw Team rules Enduro SML leg

THE TOP THREE PLACERS FINished almost within 10 minutes of each other to underscore the spirited competition in the Mindanao leg of the Enduro San Mig Light Adventure Series 2006 recently.

Madayaw "move free by mulatto" Team proved the fastest and craftiest team in the field, finishing in four hours, 18 minutes and 38 seconds.

The team of Jerson Ray Royana, Bart Demafeliz and Felina Tadiaman won P15,000 for dominating the second of three legs of the series which culminates with the Manila leg on July 7 and 8.

Rudy Project ETFPS-Triad, made up of Eric John Luna, Mary Anne Nillas and Dexter Norato, came in second in 4:26:27 and won P10,000. Team Juice Triad wound up third in 4:35:21.

Race director Neyney Guevarra said the Mindanao leg was a big success. "The enthusiasm and aggressiveness of the racers were overwhelming. Davao City proved a good venue for adventure racing. The place made the race more interesting, tricky and challenging, which just suited the participants."

Aside from San Mig Light, the other sponsors are the NS Royal, Converse and Habagat, and Cebu nightspots Cue Cafe, UH, Patio Escilla, Pump, Yo Latino, Kasadja, Ratsky, Vudu, Formo and Kahayag Cafe.

The finale in Manila will have two races for novice and elite participants. The first leg was in Cebu City last May 27 and the just concluded second leg were reserved for novice entries.

The novice race—composed of yuppies, weekend warriors, students and outdoor adventure enthusiasts—will test their skills in a lung-busting 4-6 hour race.

Expected to vie for the coveted plum in the elite category are some of the former national triahtletes and hardcore athletes who will battle it out in a grueling 24-hour race.

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Pimentel stays clean, bolsters gold medal bid

NEOPHYTE JOEL PIMENTEL OF BACOLOD City bested Farid Firmansyah of Indonesia Thursday to stretch his winning run to six and move closer toward the gold medal in the boy's 14 and under division of the 7th Asean Age-Group Chess Championships at the Mercure Convention Center in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The 24th-ranked Pimentel, an incoming freshman of La Salle-Greenhills, prevailed with the black pieces after 45 moves of a Sicilian Defense-Najdorf variation to boost his total to a perfect 6.0 points.

Pimentel grabbed the lead by beating overnight co-leader Dong Bao Nghia of Vietnam after 48 moves of a Maroczy Bind encounter in the fifth round late Wednesday.

Whiz kid Jan Emmanuel Garcia of Sampaloc, Manila, bounced back in contention in the boys' 12 and under following back-to-back victories over Le Nguyen Quoc Thuan of Vietnam and Julius Solichin of Indonesia, respectively.

The 10-year-old incoming grade six pupil of San Beda College raised his total to 5.0 points.

Paolo Bersamina of Pasay City scored 1.5 points in two outings and also stayed in the title hunt. The 19th-seeded Bersamina whipped Yeoh Li Tian of Malaysia and settled for a draw with Dang Vu Khoa of Vietnam to improve his record to 4.5 points in the boys' 8 and under.

Also scoring 1.5 points after two games of play and notching 4.0 points is Paulo James Florendo of Zamboanga City in the boys' 18 and under. A

Boys' 16 and under bet John Ranel Morazo of Paniqui, Tarlac, yielded to 3rd pick Teo Wei Xing of Singapore in 32 moves of a Veresov Game to stay at 3.0 points.

Melwyn Kenneth Baltazar of Malabon City drew with Le Huu Thai of Vietnam in the sixth round to lodge at 3.0 points.

In the distaff side, Chardine Cheradee Camacho of La Union, and Rulp Ylem Jose also scored two in a row. Camacho trounced Yemi Jelsen of Indonesia in the fifth and Chelsie Monica Sihite of Indonesia in the sixth to rise to 4.5 points in the girls' 12 and under.

Jose downed Nguyen Thi Thu Quyen of Vietnam and Margaretha Jane Sovita of Indonesia to climb to 4.0 points. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

Titanic battle seen between Tiger, Phil

MAMARONECK, NEW YORK—A Titanic battle between Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson at Winged Foot Golf Club would make this week's US Open one of the most memorable major championships in recent history.

For the first time since Woods began his dominant run in late 1999, the world number one appears to have a consistent challenger at the game's highest level.

Left-hander Mickelson hunts a third consecutive major title at Winged Foot and, in the minds of most of his peers, tops the pre-tournament billing.

For his part, Woods is embarking on the unknown. He returns to competitive golf after an absence of more than two months, having grieved for his father Earl who died on May 3 after a long battle with cancer.

A nine-week break is hardly an ideal buildup but Woods is renowned for his unwavering focus and his quest to build on a career tally of 10 majors underpins his approach to the game.

"I'm here to compete and play and try to win this championship," the 30-year-old American told a news conference this week.

"I know that Dad would still want me to go out there and grind it and give it my best, and that's what I always do.

WOODS: Embarking on the unknown

MICKELSON: Consistent challenger

That's what I will certainly try to do this week."

Asked whether he was concerned about being a little rusty, Woods replied: "The two times I've taken my longest breaks have been after my knee surgery in 2002 and this past winter, taking six weeks off or whatever it was.

"Both times I've come back and I've won. It's just one of those things where it's your preparation, your practice and your attention to detail when you are preparing.

"That's something that I've learned and I've done very well, I think, in the past. It's applied to this stretch. I've had plenty of time to get ready."

Woods was reluctant, however, to make too much of a developing major rivalry with Mickelson.

"You have runs where Ernie (Els) was there for a little bit, then Vijay (Singh), Goose (Retief Goosen), and now Phil," he said.

"I suppose as long as I can be part of that conversation, it's never a bad thing."

Mickelson is unquestionably the game's in-form player and likes his chances going into his 16th US Open.

"I've come to the point where I enjoy the challenge of trying to be successful in these very difficult tests of golf," said the likeable Californian, who clinched the US PGA Championship at Baltusrol last August before winning the US Masters in April.

"I know I can play well in this tournament, even though it doesn't necessarily fit my perception of how I've played with the thick rough and so on.

"I still have had some success here, and all I'm trying to do is be successful on this one golf course at this one event."

Having endured a 12-year wait before making his major breakthrough at the 2004 US Masters, Mickelson is now arguably the game's most prepared player at grand slam events.

He has made three separate trips this year to Winged Foot to refine his playing strategy on a layout characterized by slick and heavily contoured greens, thick rough and tight fairways.

"I feel I know the course as well as I can," said the world number two, who will celebrate his 36th birthday on Friday.

"But I still have a great challenge, and the challenge is executing, hitting the shots. That's the toughest part." *Reuters*

Apa sees view from roof of the world

SHERPA

KATMANDU—NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THE view is like from the roof of the world as well as Apa Sherpa—he has climbed the world's highest mountain a record 16 times.

The wiry 46-year-old with stooped shoulders is regarded as the king of all sherpas by climbers and peers alike, and last month he risked his life and wife's wrath to return to Everest's 8,848 meter (29,028 feet) summit.

While news that he had again conquered the "death-zone" made him the toast of the town in Nepal's Thame, in Solukhumbu district in the foothills of the Himalayas, his worried wife wasn't joining in the celebrations.

"When I said I had retired it was not due to my physical condition, but due to family pressure," says Apa Sherpa, who announced he was quitting in 2003.

"My wife did not know about this season's summit until I reached there. She was very angry," he adds, breaking into an infectious laugh.

Despite his promise to quit, Apa was also back atop Everest in 2004 and 2005.

His wife's fears are understandable on a mountain that has claimed more than 200 lives. Danger stalks a climber's every step up Everest, including the indigenous sherpas who work as support crews to foreign mountaineering expeditions. *AFP*

Calilan's gone but JRU intact

JOSE RIZAL UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC DIRECTOR Paul Supan yesterday confirmed the resignation of coach Cris Calilan less than two weeks before the start of the NCAA basketball season. But while Supan admitted that Calilan tendered his resignation, he stressed that the long-time JRU stalwart didn't take any players with him. "The team is still intact," Supan told the INQUIRER. "But coach Cris decided to move on." Supan, who sits in the league's management committee, added that they are considering two top collegiate coaches as Calilan's replacement. The list didn't include Olympian Jimmy Mariano as earlier reported.

RP junior boxers bag 2 golds

HANOI—The four-man Philippine junior boxing team captured two gold and two silver medals to end their fruitful stint in the 3rd Hanoi International Boxing Competitions among women, cadet and junior fighters here.

Michael Paragoso (46 kg) and Orlando Tacuyan (57kg) proved too strong and classy against their Taiwanese rivals to rule their respective classes in the 14-country championships.

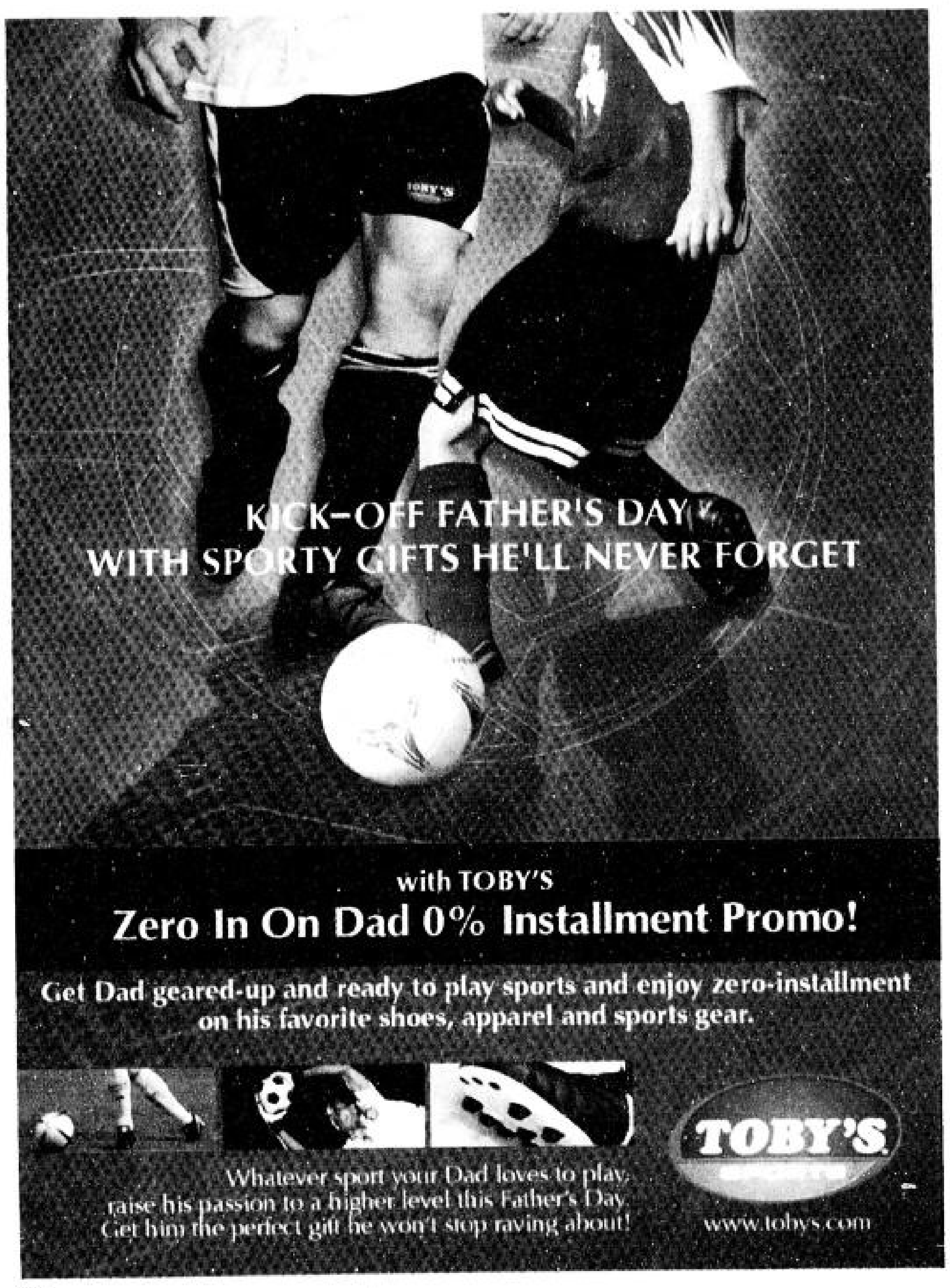
Paragoso won over Cheng Chun-wei via an RSC-OS (referee stopped contest-outscored) in the second round, 25-4.

Tacuyan, who was later adjudged the best boxer in the junior division, proved too much for Ching Chu-juan as the referee likewise stopped the contest at 30-10 in the second round. The Filipino earlier disposed of local hope Nguyen Van Manh in the second round.

The three-member RP women's team—Southeast Asian Games champions Alice Kate Appari, Annie Albania, and Mitchel Martinez—also barged into the gold-medal matches in convincing fashion.

Appari outpointed Sri Lanka's Chabdrika, 23 -12; Albania stopped Vietnam's Vu Thi Hai Yen, 16-1 (RSC-OS) in the second round; and Martines halted Thailand's Ratre Kruakhe, 18-3 (RSC-OS), also in the second.

SEA Games gold medalist Mitchel Martinez gunning for another gold.



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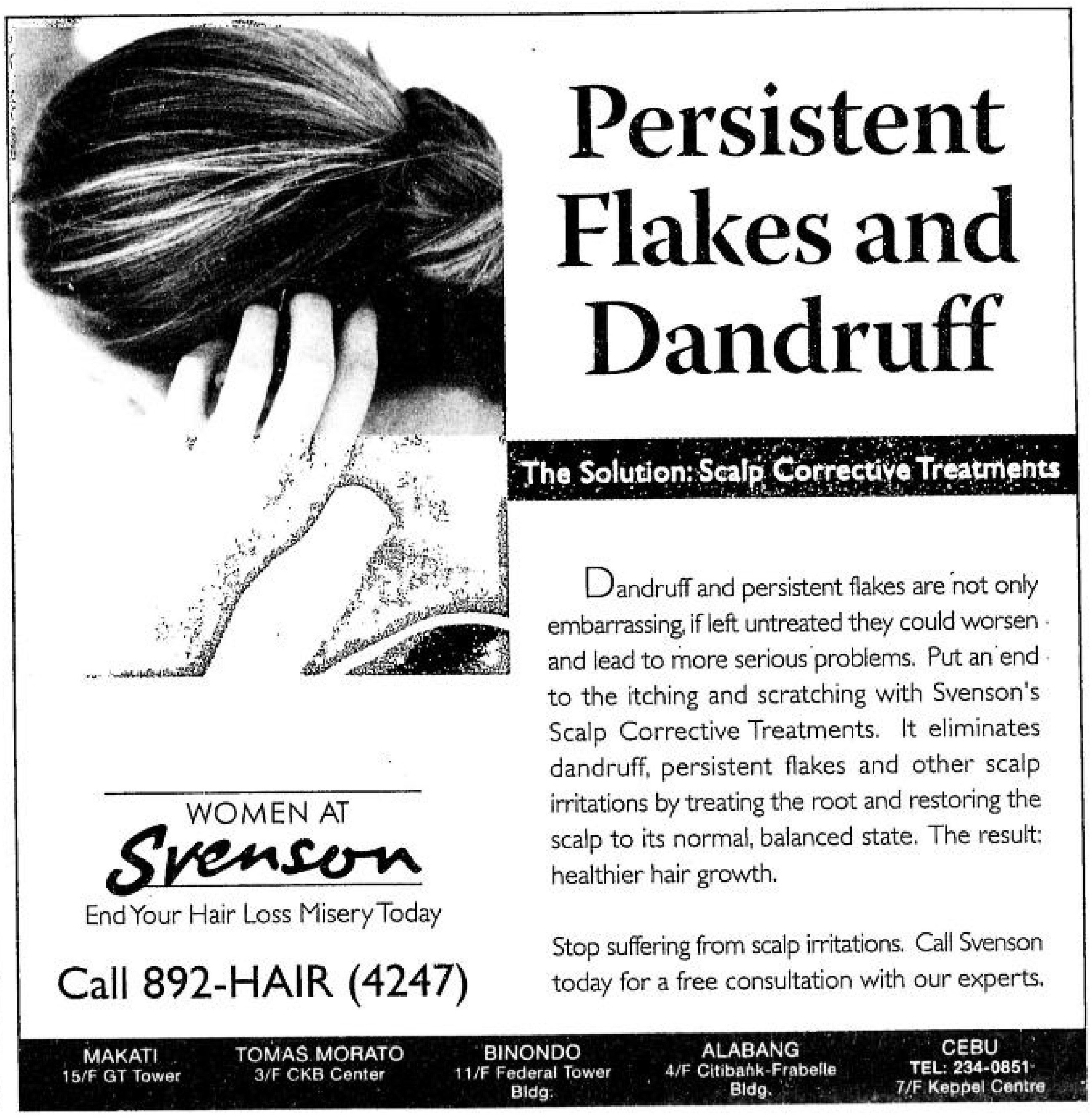

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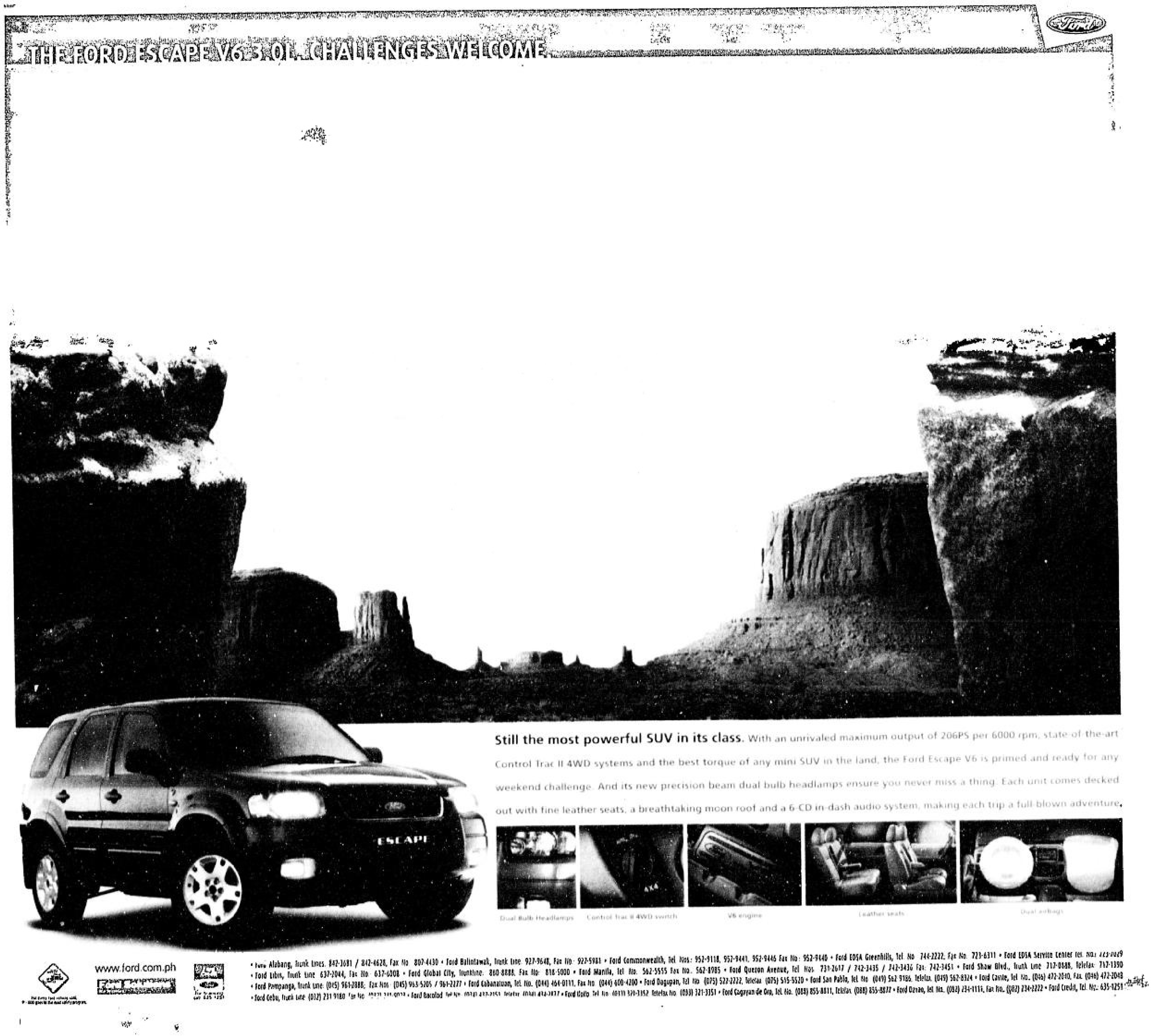

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Building a new life together

By Nini Valera

FREEDOM DAY CAME A week early for Marvin Agustin and his father, Danilo Cuyugan.

Last June 5, Cuyugan, who was serving a sentence for drug-related charges at the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa, was granted parole. He was reunited with his family.

An ecstatic Marvin told INQUIRER Entertainment on Tuesday that having his father back was like having a new best friend live with him in his condominium in Wack-Wack, Mandaluyong City. Cuyugan had been estranged from his wife, Teresa, Marvin's mother, when he went to prison.

"Although I am his son, [I think] being best friends is the relationship that would work best for us," said Marvin.

The actor described his recent days with his father as a series of bonding episodes:

"We would go jogging together in the morning, boxing during the day. I would ask him to come with me to tapings, or I take him to my restaurant (Sumo Sam in Shangri-la Mall). He asked me to take him

BUILDING/ A2-3

Pops is 'it'

'Contravida' to Zsazsa's Zaturnnah, that is

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

POPS FERNANDEZ HAS BEEN CAST AS QUEEN Femina Suarestellar Baroux, the man-bashing alien and archenemy of Zsazsa Zaturnnah, Carlo Vergara's comic-book superheroine.

This development was confirmed by director Joel Lamangan and Regal producer Lily Monteverde, who are fielding the comic book's movie version in this December's Metro Manila Film Festival.

Lamangan also revealed the names of other confirmed cast members. Playing the role of Femina's ladies-in-waiting will be Giselle Sanchez, Tuesday Vargas, K Brosas and Maureen Larrazabal.

Dodong, Didi

Although Polo Ravales was considered, Alfred Vargas remains as Dodong, the love interest, said Lamangan.

The role of Didi, funny sidekick, is yet to be cast. Original choice Allan K backed out, Lamangan related, "in deference to (his "Eat Bulaga" co-host) Vic Sotto, who also has an entry in this year's MMFF ('Enteng Kabisote 3')."

Other names being considered as Didi are Paolo Contis and Janno Gibbs, but Monteverde admitted that her heart was set on Ogie Alcasid.

Ogie was originally tapped as Ada, a role that will now be played by Rustom Padilla.

Pops is raring to be *contravida* to Zsazsa Padilla's Zaturnnah.

"I don't mind at all being the villainess," Fernandez told INQUIRER Entertainment in a phone intérview. "This is something different. It's exciting."

Ultra-sexy

Pops did her homework. She asked her manager Arnold Vegafria to buy a copy of the comic book for her. "It was hilarious and, well, gay!"

Is Pops ready to don Femina's ultra-sexy costumes?

"I'm not sure if I can pull it off," demurred the mother of two. "But I'm willing to undergo training for this role. There'll be fight scenes, so I need to look convincing."

A breeze, was how she described her working relationship with Zsazsa. "I've worked with her on (TV shows) 'ASAP' and 'Morning Girls.' I know how hard she's been preparing for this movie."

Asked how she finds her man-hating role, she joked: "Isn't it lovely?"

Lest the public get the wrong impression, she wasn't alluding to the men in her life—former husband Martin Nievera and rumored boyfriend Jomari Yllana.

Healed

"Martin and I have chosen to be friends," she owned up. "I've healed a lot."

She tactfully dodged questions about Martin's girlfriend Katrina Ojeda's supposed date with the stork. "I don't think it's proper for me to discuss it. It should come from Martin."

As for Jomari?

"I'd rather not talk about him," she said. Suffice it so say… "He's fine and I'm happy."

She explained: "I have a lot of things to be thankful for. Like, my son Robin graduated from high school. My younger son Ram dreams of being a cartoonist and is graduating in three years. Robin wrote a song for me called 'Friend.' He even agreed to sing it with me in my upcoming album. Also, Martin wrote a tune for me, titled 'Still In Love,' believe it or not!"

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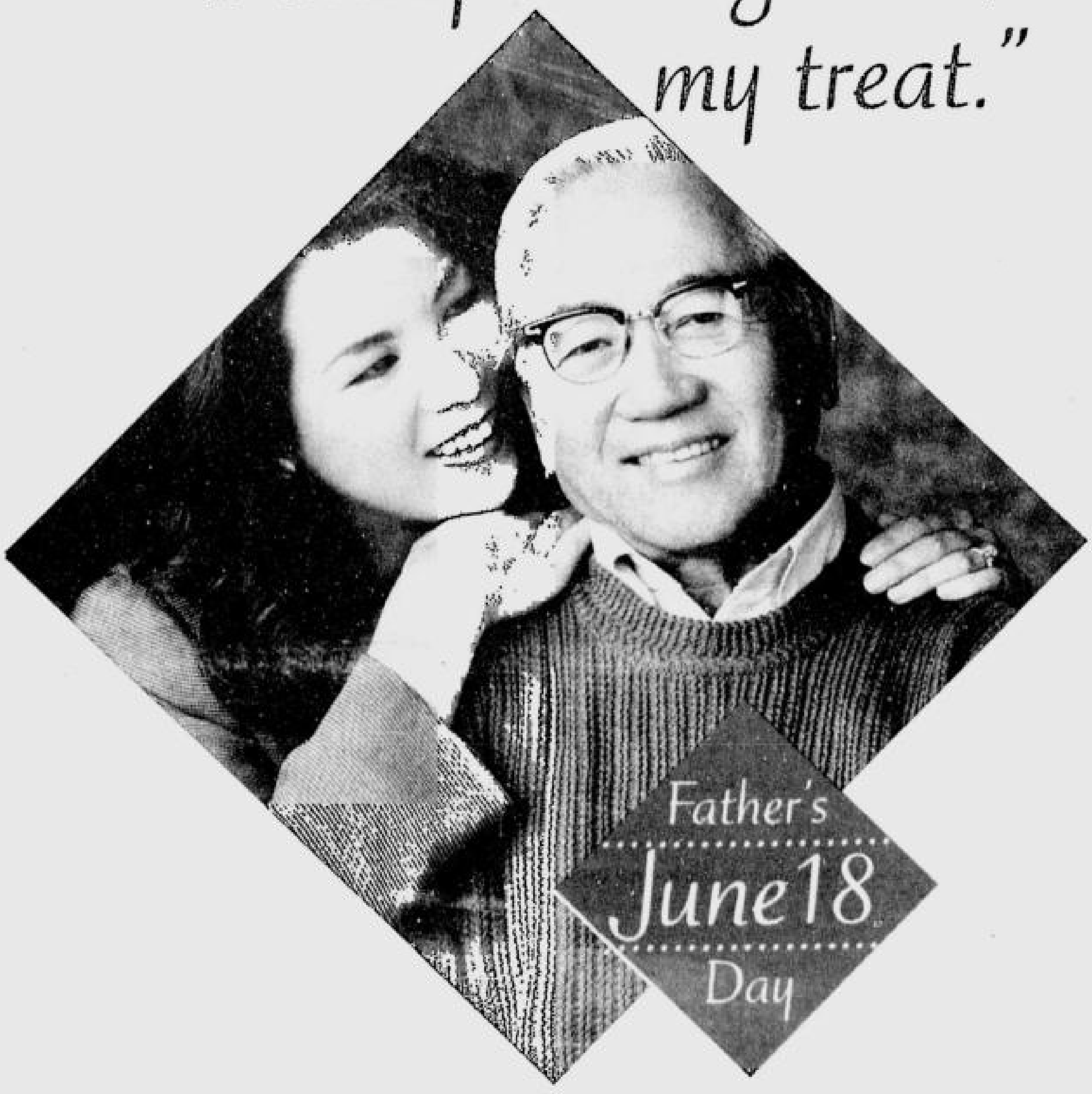

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Cinema	Movie	Times	Rating
1	AMERICAN HAUNTING	12:15, 2:25, 4:35, 6:45, 9:00	PG13
2	CARS	11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00	GP

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Cinema	Movie	Times	Rating
3	GARFIELD 2	10:40, 12:35, 2:30, 4:25, 6:20, 8:15, 10:10	GP
4	FAST & THE FURIOUS	11:45, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30	PG13
5	LAKE HOUSE	10:30, 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10	PG13

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MUSIC MUSEUM	JUNE 16,17,23,24,30,2006	NINA in VERY MANILOW	9:00PM
	JULY 8,2006	GLADYS GUEVARA	9:00PM
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	JUNE 16,17,23,24,2006	WERE STILL HOT "THE MUSICAL" FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722-4532 LOC 116	8:00PM

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Cinema	Movie	Rating	Times
1	FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL		
2	THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT	MTRCB PG-13	12:30, 2:50, 5:10
3	CARS	MTRCB GP	11:40, 2:15, 4:50
3	THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT	MTRCB GP	7:30, 10:10
4	LAKE HOUSE	MTRCB GP	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
PREMIERE THEATRE	GARFIELD 2	MTRCB GP	1:20, 3:30, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

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Movie	Rating	Times
THE INSIDE MAN	PG13	2:00,4:40,7:20,10:00
GARFIELD 2	G	2:00,4:00,6:00,8:00,10:00
THE LAKE HOUSE	PG13	1:45,3:55,6:05,8:15,10:25
CARS	G	2:20,5:00,7:40,10:20
AMERICAN HAUNTING	PG13	1:50,3:50,5:50,7:50,9:50
THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT		

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440/41

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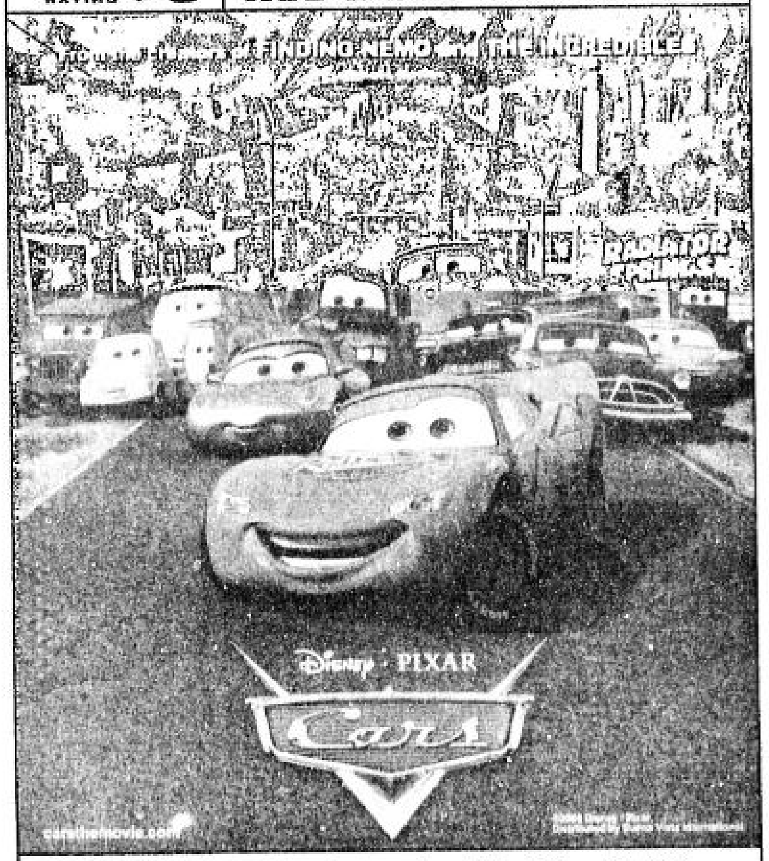
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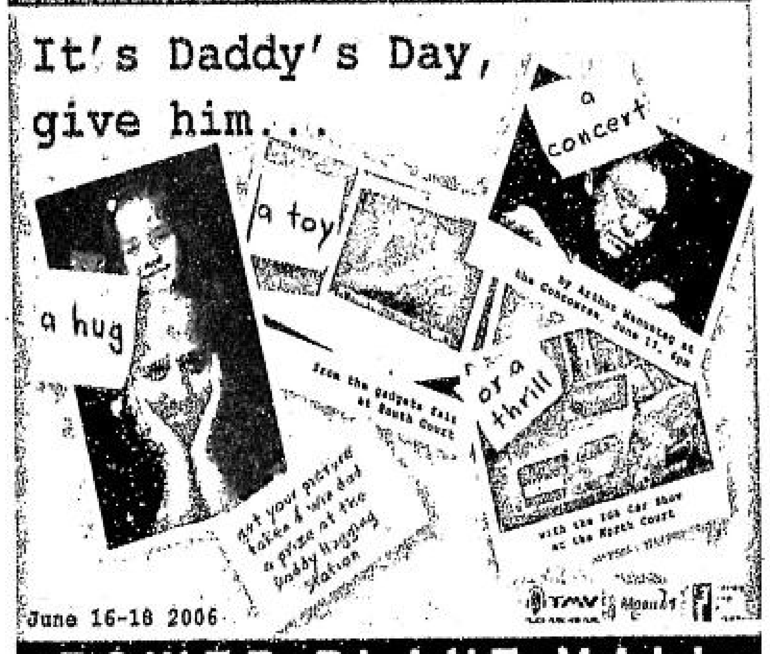
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Mall	Cinema	Movie	Times
G1 GLORIETTA 1	1	THE OMEN	
	2	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND.	
	3	MANAY PO	
	4	ALL ABOUT LOVE	
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1	CARS	
	2	THE OMEN	
	3 THX	INSIDE MAN	12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	FAILURE TO LAUNCH	
	5	TAKE THE LEAD	
	6	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	
	7	THE DA VINCI CODE	
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	
	2	THE OMEN	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX	CARS	2:30, 5:10, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
	2 THX	THE OMEN	2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS
	3	TAKE THE LEAD	1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS
	5	INSIDE MAN	1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 8:45, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX	CARS	
	2	INSIDE MAN	
	3	THE OMEN	
	4	TAKE THE LEAD	
	5	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1	THE OMEN	
	2	CARS	
	3	FAILURE TO LAUNCH	
	4	AQUAMARINE / X-MEN	
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1	THE OMEN	
	2	CARS	
	3	TAKE THE LEAD	
	4	INSIDE MAN	
	5	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	

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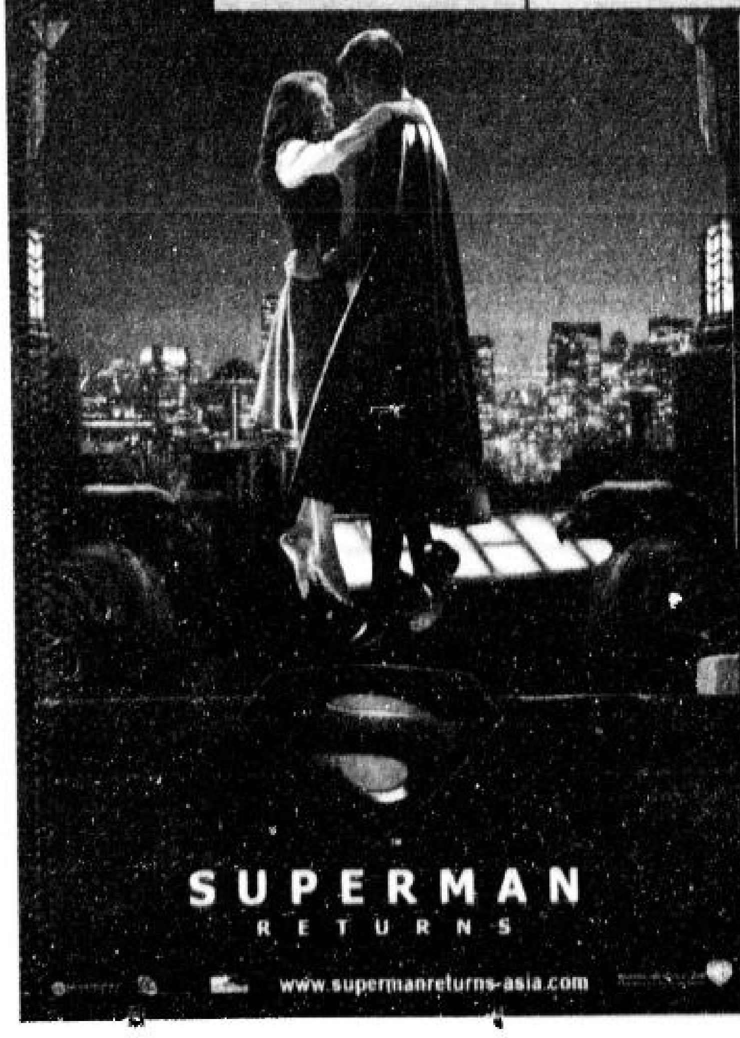
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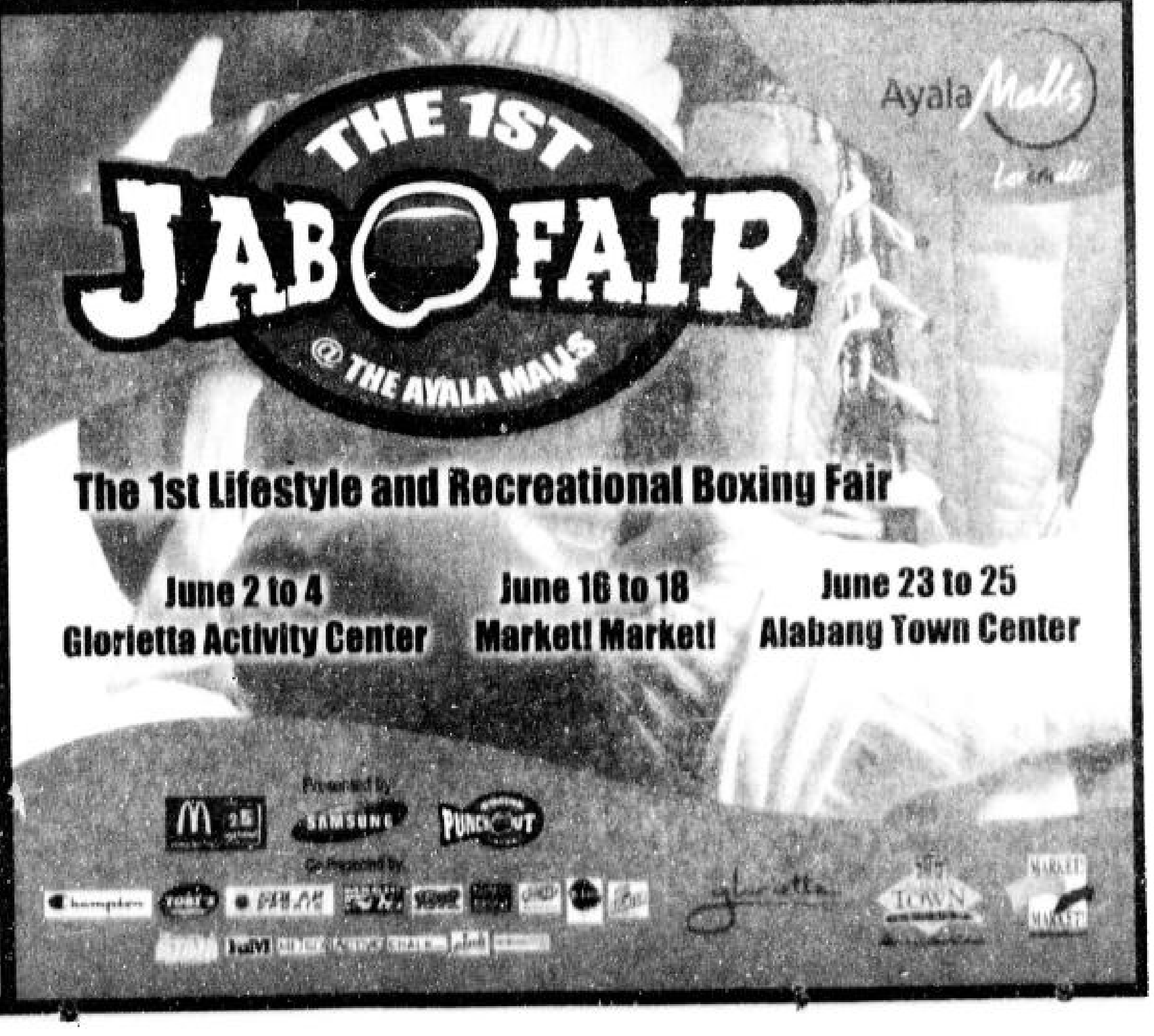
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Building a new life …

From page A2-1

to his dental appointment. Finally, we're doing things together."

Marvin was only 14 when his father was placed behind bars. The actor described his family's life at the time as a never-ending struggle to make ends meet.

Odd jobs

"I survived fourth year high school doing odd jobs," Marvin recounted. "I would sell *longganisa* and *tocino* at night, go to Baclaran to buy goods for my mother to sell. It was very hard for the family when my dad went to jail. We sold everything we had. We were down to our rice cooker."

The struggle eased for the Cuyugans when Marvin was discovered by ABS-CBN and eventually became a matinee idol. He has now evolved into a serious actor and is raring to try his hand at directing.

Reconciliation?

Marvin admitted that he would love to see his father and mother reconcile as husband and wife.

"Both say they are still adjusting," Marvin said. "Adjusting is the word they use. But how long will they have to adjust to each other before they move on? I am not forcing the issue. But the more they delay, the more they fail to see the blessings in front of them."

He said he would still play the role of head of the family even if he already has his own children—Sebastian and Santiago, his 10-month-old twin sons from a past liaison.

"I'm a father myself and I feel guilty sometimes knowing that I can't be with their mother," Marvin admitted. "But I've moved on and am making the best of my situation."

Moving on

Marvin has also moved on in his career. After his 11-year contract star status with ABS-CBN's Star Magic, the actor declared his independence and moved to GMA 7, where he was immediately cast in the teleserye "I Luv New York."

"I'm very grateful to ABS-CBN," he said. "The network helped shape my career and brought me to where I am now. The reason that I asked to be released from my contract was lack of projects within the network."

He said what he was being offered did not seem right for him.

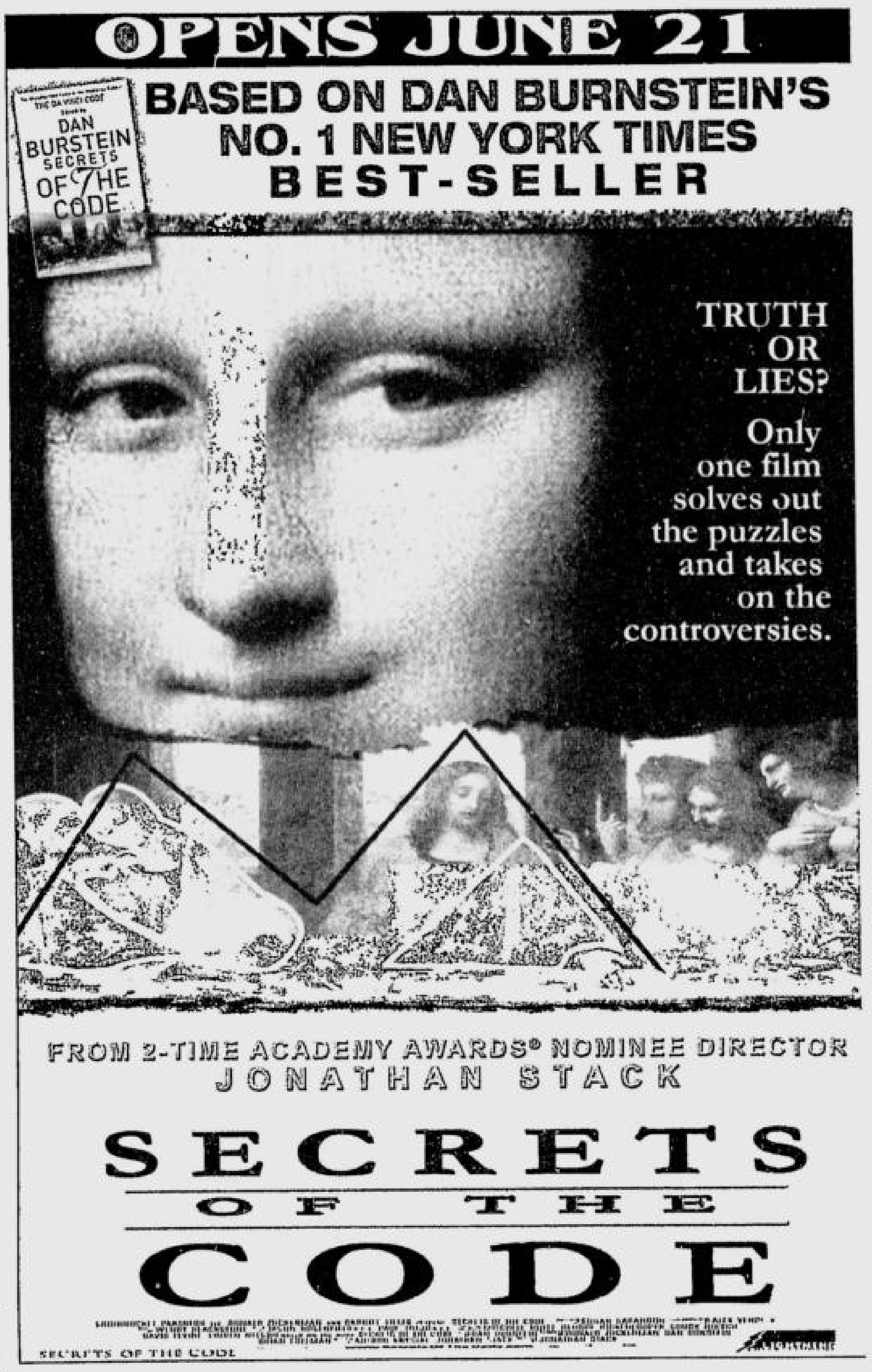
"At this point in my career, I feel that I have time to wait for the right projects," he said. "[For instance] When the offer came for me to reunite with Jolina (Magdangal) in GMA 7, I felt that show was something I had been waiting for. Only, it was not from ABS-CBN."

Not easy

Marvin admitted it was a not easy cutting his ties with his former mother network.

"But everybody took my decision well," he said. "Now, I'm a free-lance actor. The bottom line, is I'm happy with my life."

MARVIN Agustin



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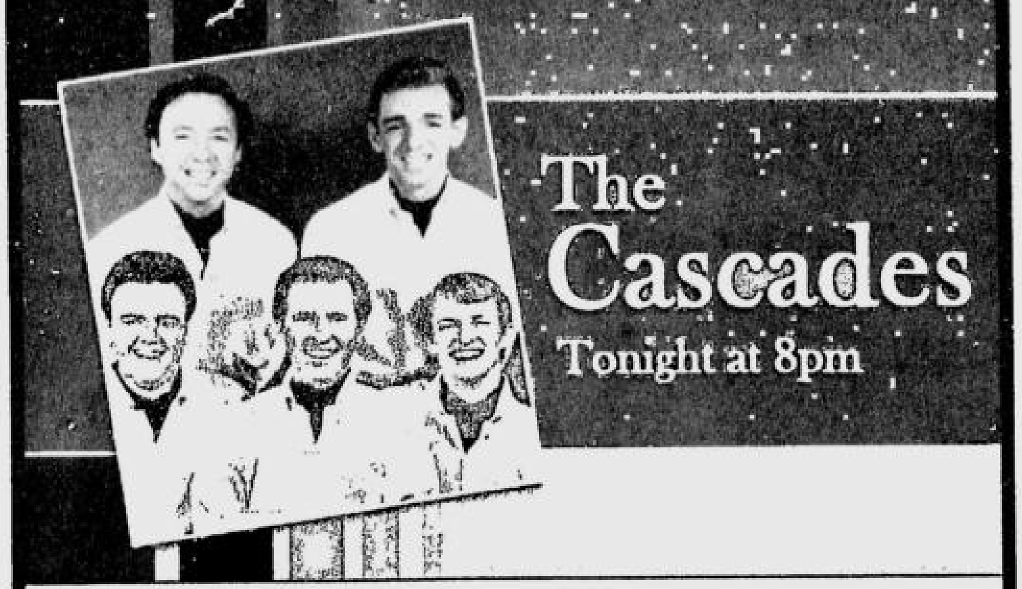

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CARS 11:00 / 1:30 / 4:00 / 7:30 / 9:00	AMERICAN HAUNTING 1:05 / 3:15 / 5:25 / 7:35 / 9:45	OMEN 666 1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20	
TAKE THE LEAD 1:00 / 3:50 INSIDE MAN 6:45 / 9:30	THE DA VINCI CODE 12:30 / 3:40 / 6:50 / 10:00	X-MEN 3 12:40 / 3:00 / 5:20 / 7:40 / 10:00	THE LAKE HOUSE 12:45 / 2:55 / 5:05 / 7:15 / 9:25

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1	KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO 12:05 / 2:15 / 4:25 / 6:35 / 8:45	THE LAKE HOUSE 12:20 / 2:20 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35	X-MEN 3 11:30 / 1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50	
4	CARS 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00	GARFIELD 2 12:15 R3 / 1:45 / 3:55 / 6:20 / 8:30	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS	

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1 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3 • THX		6 CARS	11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO	12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10.00	7 THE DA VINCI CODE	12:30 3:40 6:50 10.00
3 X-MEN 3	12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	8 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING	1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
4 GARFIELD 2: A TAIL OF TWO KITTIES	12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00	9 TAKE THE LEAD	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
5 LAKE HOUSE	11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50	10 THE OMEN	12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

ERMITA [illegible]

1 GARFIELD 2	12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00		
2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00	5 CARS	12.00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
3 X-MEN 3 THE OMEN	11:00 1:00 2:55 5:10 7:30 9:50	6 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING	12:20 2.20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
4 LAKE HOUSE	12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50	7 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3	

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1 THE INSIDE MAN THE DA VINCI CODE	1:00 3:35 6:00 9:00	5 THE OMEN X-MEN 3	12:25 2:35 4:45 6:50 9:00
2 CARS	1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00	6 LAKE HOUSE	11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO	11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05	7 GARFIELD 2	12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10
4 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3		8 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING	12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

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1 GARFIELD 2	4 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
2 THE DA VINCI CODE	5 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
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3 THE OMEN	3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
4 GARFIELD 2: A TAIL OF TWO KITTIES	4 GARFIELD 2
5 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO	5 LAKE HOUSE
6 CARS	6 X-MEN 3 / THE OMEN

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Look! Up on the screen! It's Superman!

From page A2-6

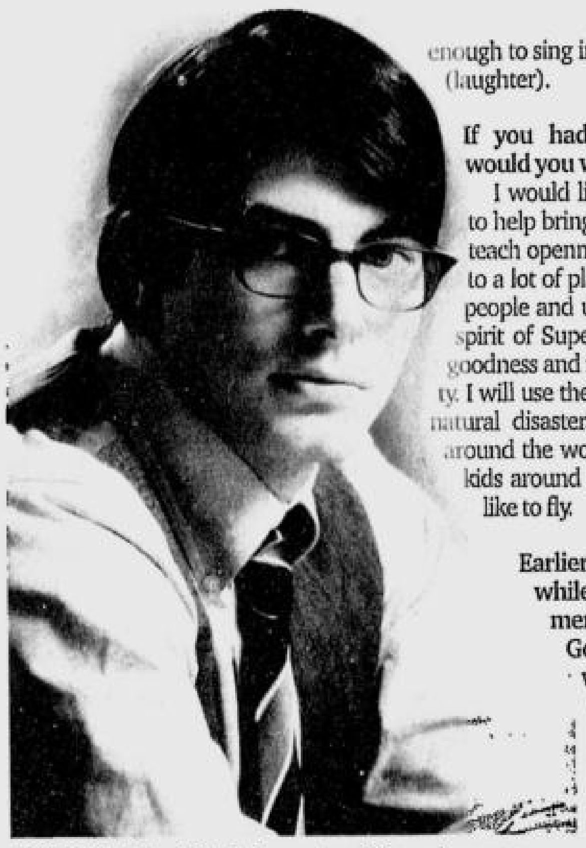
that if she were here, she'd say that I have already swept her off her feet (laughter). I am pretty sure she would say that. But she was with me before all of this started. She was there on the first day when we had a meeting for the role and watched me change into Superman. She actually was Lois for me many times since I practiced some scenes with her. We were both thrust into the limelight at the same time so it has been fantastic to have her.

Did she find the film sexy?

Yes. She likes the whole thing. She was a big Superman fan as a kid. She has her own stories on trying to become Superman so she was really excited about this.

You mentioned that your sister is a musician. Do you also sing and play instruments?

I play trumpet and piano and I sing. But among those skills, I am best in trumpeting. I sang for a long time and did musicals in middle school and high school but my voice is probably better in a group than as a solo voice. Maybe with the help of technology, I would sound good enough to sing in a musical film someday (laughter).



"I HAVE a bit of Clark Kent, too," Brandon says.

If you had super powers, what would you want those to be?

I would like to have super powers to help bring about awareness of and teach openness to people. I would fly to a lot of places and speak to a lot of people and use the character and the spirit of Superman to unite people in goodness and in the strength of positivity. I will use the super powers to prevent natural disasters and avoid devastation around the world. And maybe fly some kids around so they can feel what it's like to fly.

Earlier you said that after a while, celebrities become mere human beings. At the Golden Globes this year, was there anybody you wanted to meet?

I would have loved to meet George Clooney because he does these amazing things in Hollywood and I am really proud of what he has done with his own films. I would have also liked to meet Will Ferrell. I was very close to meeting him but I never got to shake his hand and say hello. I sat with the cast of "Will & Grace" and that was fun. They were great.

What makes a man a man?

It involves not only being honest with other people but also being honest with yourself. That's the most important thing. If you don't know who you are, you are not truthful about how you feel, you don't have opinions and don't stick to those opinions, then you are going to be wishy-washy. That's one thing that Superman is not. He is not wishy-washy (laughter).

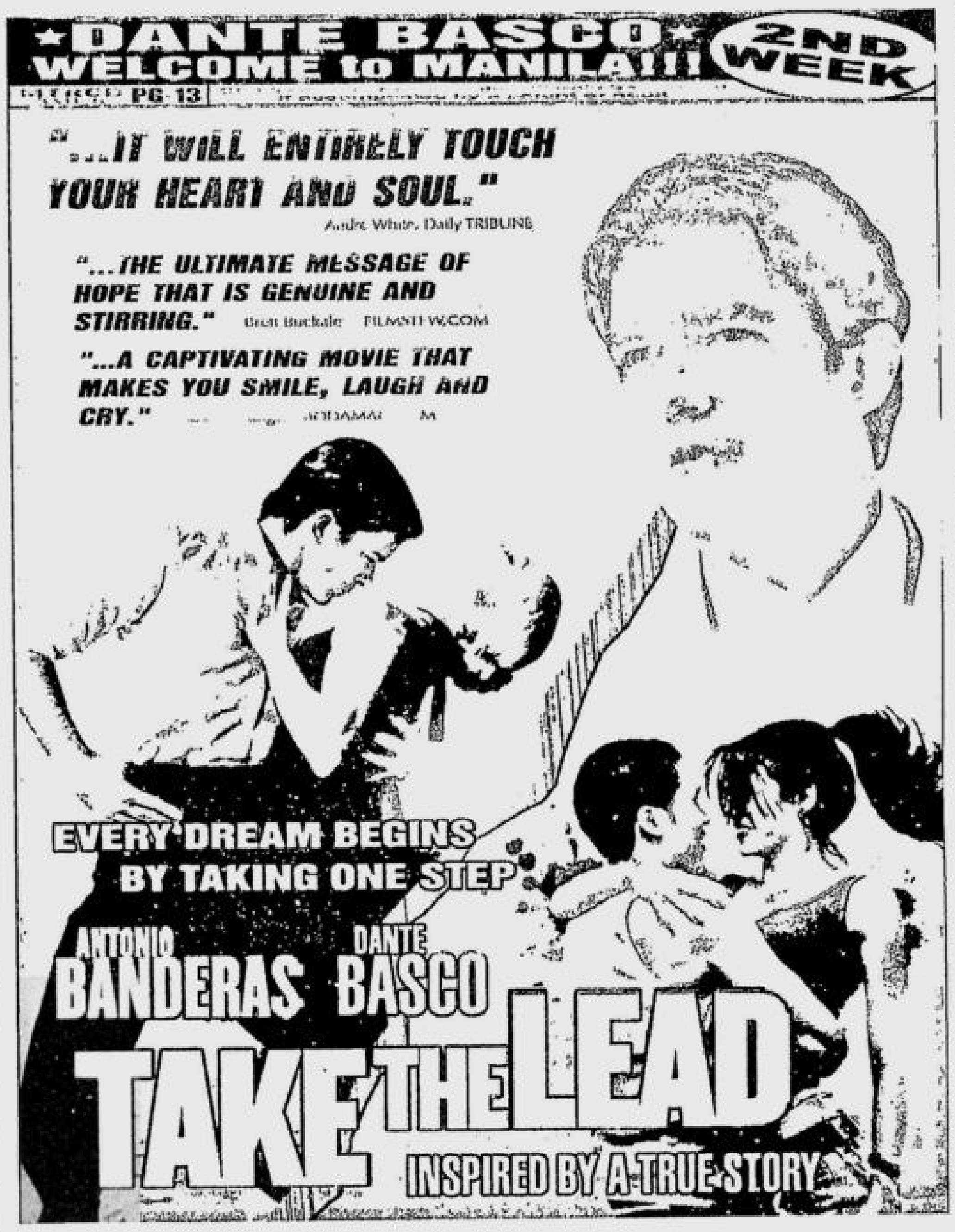
Superman has a double personality. What about you?

I definitely have been much like Clark Kent in the past. A little awkward and clumsy. I have that part of me, thanks to my mom (laughter). People don't believe this now but I wasn't the most popular kid in school. And I do wear glasses, although I wear contacts most of the time. But on other days, I show strength and confidence. We all have alternate personalities in a way.

Can you tell us more about yourself?

I went to the University of Iowa for a year where I was an English major. I wanted to be a novelist. I am still interested in writing. I don't do it as much as I used to because I don't have much time. I also had an interest in graphic design. I like creating logos and slogans and creative stuff like that. I went to Los Angeles in the fall of 1999 when I quit school to give acting a shot. I never really thought that I could become a movie actor since I come from a small town in Iowa. I did some modeling just to make some money since I was a poor college student. That led me to New York, where I met a talent manager who actually said I looked a lot like Christopher Reeve. I thought I had a little bit of talent, too, in monologues. I had planned to be in Los Angeles for three months and those three months turned into seven years. I made a big leap from soap actor to Superman.

(E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.)



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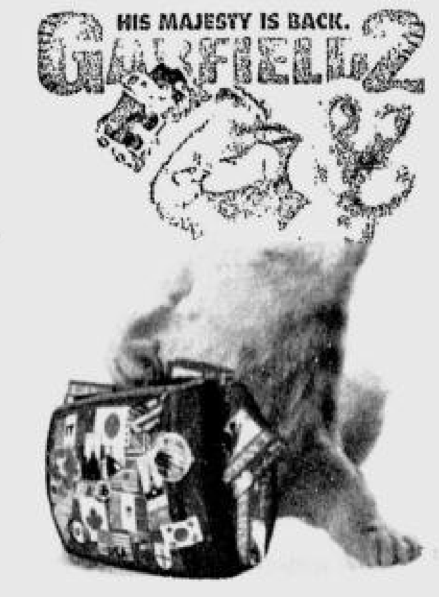

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GARFIELD 2

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LAKE HOUSE
GARFIELD 2

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MANAY PO

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AMERICAN HAUNTING
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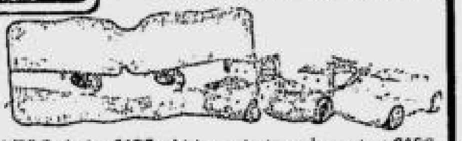

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Send in your answers together with your name, address, age and contact number at your nearest SM Cinema branch or e-mail to movieaddicts_smcinema@yahoo.com Ten (10) lucky winners will be chosen from all the entries received. Answers must all be correct in order to qualify. Multiple entries sent will only be counted as a single entry. Deadline for the submission of entries is on June 20, 2006

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Good guys don't stand a chance

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE REMAKE OF THE CLASSIC chiller, "The Omen," is an occasionally gripping and scarifying film. Ultimately, however, after all of its horrific and fear-inducing moments have receded in recollection, the movies' total impact is compromised by the fact that, throughout the production, evil constantly triumphs, and the good guys don't stand a chance of surviving, let alone winning.

Now, it may be true that demonic forces are unusually strong, especially, because they are brilliantly crafty, while good people tend to be too trusting and even clueless at times, thus enabling evil to hold sway much of the time.

But, for evil to triumph *all* of the time, all the way up to the movie's distressingly portentous final coda—hey, that's unacceptable.

Worse, it robs the production of any real sense of conflict since, form the get-go, the "forces" of good turn out to be so weak and ineffectual.

At every turn, they're second-guessed, foiled and beaten by Satan's minions, who seem to hold all the aces in the film's hokey deck of cards.

In the remake's retelling of the original chiller's story, the US ambassador to England and his wife adopt a baby who turns out to be Satan's son, destined to emerge as the dreaded Anti-Christ upon reaching adulthood.

To make sure that this will happen with no ifs and buts, Satan's scion is surrounded by many evil attendants and acolytes who help him exterminate the good people around him—eventually including the ambassador's wife (Julia Stiles), who has been his loving adoptive mother for five long years.

All sorts of warnings and alarums are raised in the course of the storytelling, but they're all for naught as the good guys keep dropping like flies.

In time, *everybody* has been eliminated and little Damien is ensconced right within the household of the president of the United States, no less—from which, we presume, he will in time wreak his evil vengeance on the whole world!

This is supposed to be a terrifying prospect, but the movie's conflict has been so one-sided that the viewer has long ceased to really care about how it will turn out. It's a foregone conclusion, anyway.

That's a great pity, since the new "The Omen" contains some charged performances and scarifying moments that deserve a more empathetic denouement than this.

But these plus points are ultimately for naught, because the movie has opted to side with the bad guys from chilling start to benumbing finish.

New Powerbooks branch opens

POWERBOOKS Specialty Store continues to share the pleasures and benefits of reading through its new branch at SM Mall of Asia. Located at the ground floor of the mall's Entertainment Building, Powerbook's seventh store has a specially choice section for children.

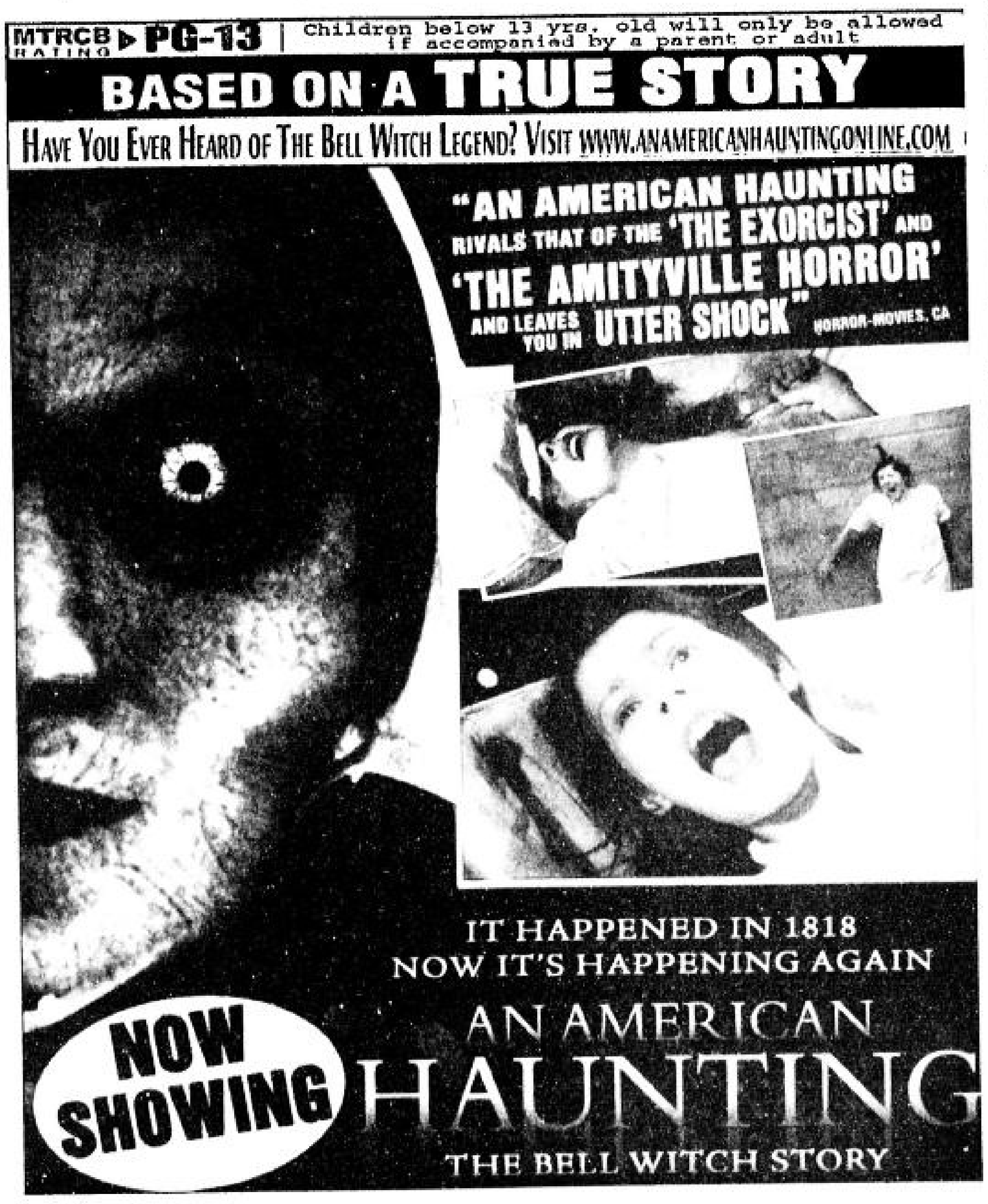
High school reunion

ALL alumni of Camarines Norte Chung Hua High School are invited to a general assembly/meeting on June 25 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the CHHS quadrangle, Daet, Camarines Norte. Guest speaker is Camarines Norte Gov. **Jesus O. Typoco Jr.**

Attention: Skycable

FEEDBACK

From Cathy Uy, Pasig City (by e-mail):
Here in Pasig, Skycable has started forcing all Skycable subscribers to use an addressable set-top box to access their programming. This means you can no longer change the channel on your TV set, you need to do it through the addressable box. The problem is, this stops us subscribers from being able to tape shows. Since one's VHS player or DVD recorder can no longer change channels (one has to manually change channels using the addressable box), one can only tape one channel (whatever channel was last set on the addressable box). This means, if you go out of the house or while you're sleeping, you can't tape different shows. This is outrageous. I was so irritated, I decided to cancel my subscription. You should do an article about this.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NEW MINSTRELS' "THE ULTImate Reunion Concert" tonight at 8 at the Aliw Theater, topbilled by Eugene Villaluz, Ray-An Fuentes, Louie Reyes, Cesar dela Fuente and Joey Albert.

SHOW TIME

Today

Bamboo performs starting at 8 p.m. for partygoers of Winston in Concert at 6Underground at the Basement, Glass Tower Bldg., Carlos Palanca Street.

***

Gary Valenciano's album tour, "Relevance," goes to Mall of Asia at 5 p.m. On June 18 at 6 p.m., "Gary V Live!" at Glorietta 4 Park. Then he performs at Ayala Center Cebu on June 30, 6 p.m., Alabang Town Center Activity Center on July 1, 6 p.m. and Market! Market! on July 8, 6 p.m.

Tomorrow

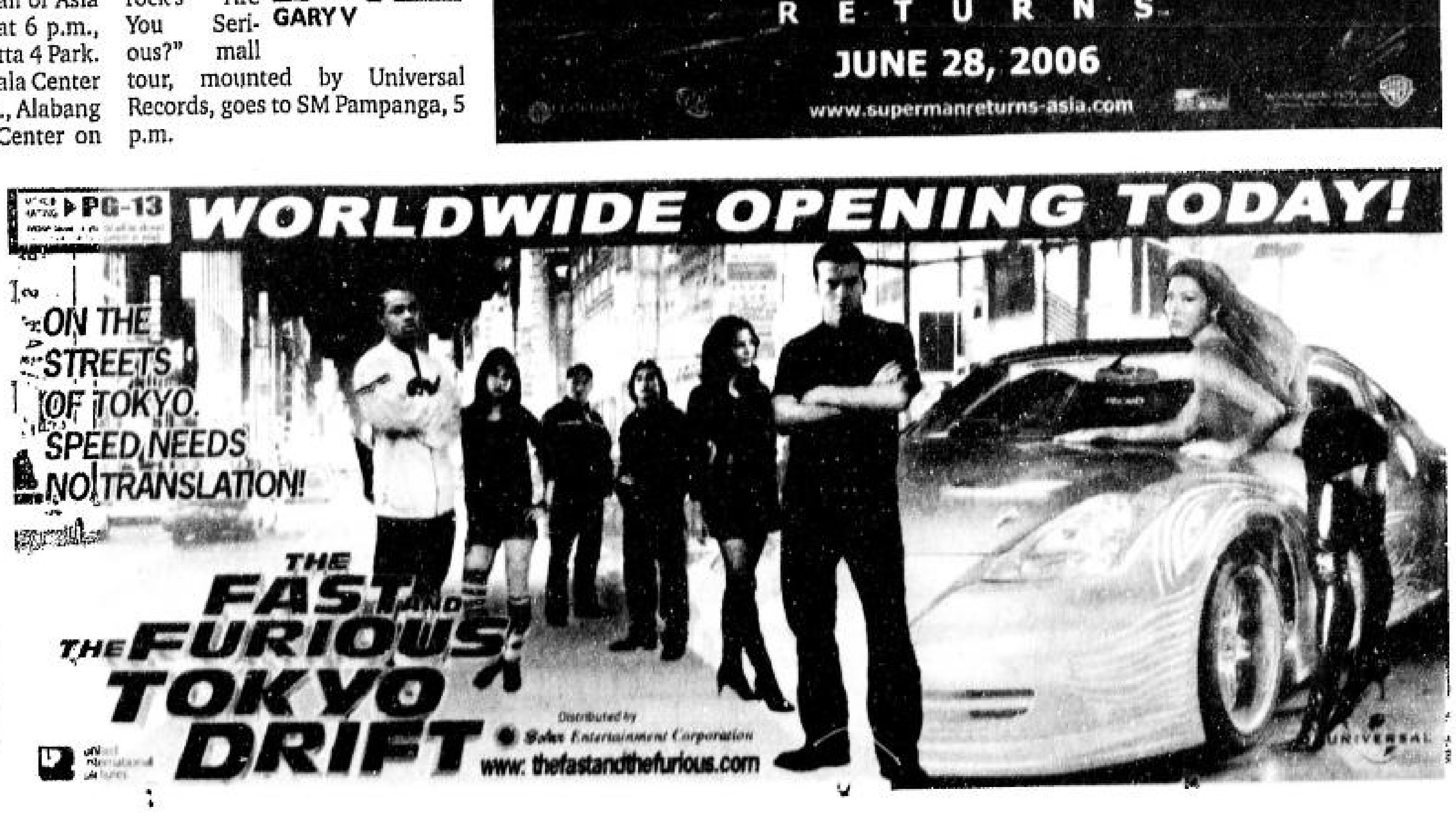
Farizzha Diro, 9, the Philippine Music Training School and Network Production's New Asia's Pop Star 2006, stars in the mini concert "What's Up?" at Robinsons Place, Novaliches, 2 p.m.

GARY V

June 18

Shamrock's "Are You Serious?" mall tour, mounted by Universal Records, goes to SM Pampanga, 5 p.m.

FARIZZHA Diro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3 CARS
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4 LAKE HOUSE
PREVIEWS
GARFIELD 2

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2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
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10 THE DA VINCI CODE

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4 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3
5 AMERICAN HAUNTING

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2 LAKE HOUSE
3 THE INSIDE MAN

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2 THE LAKE HOUSE

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2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 REINCARNATION
4 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

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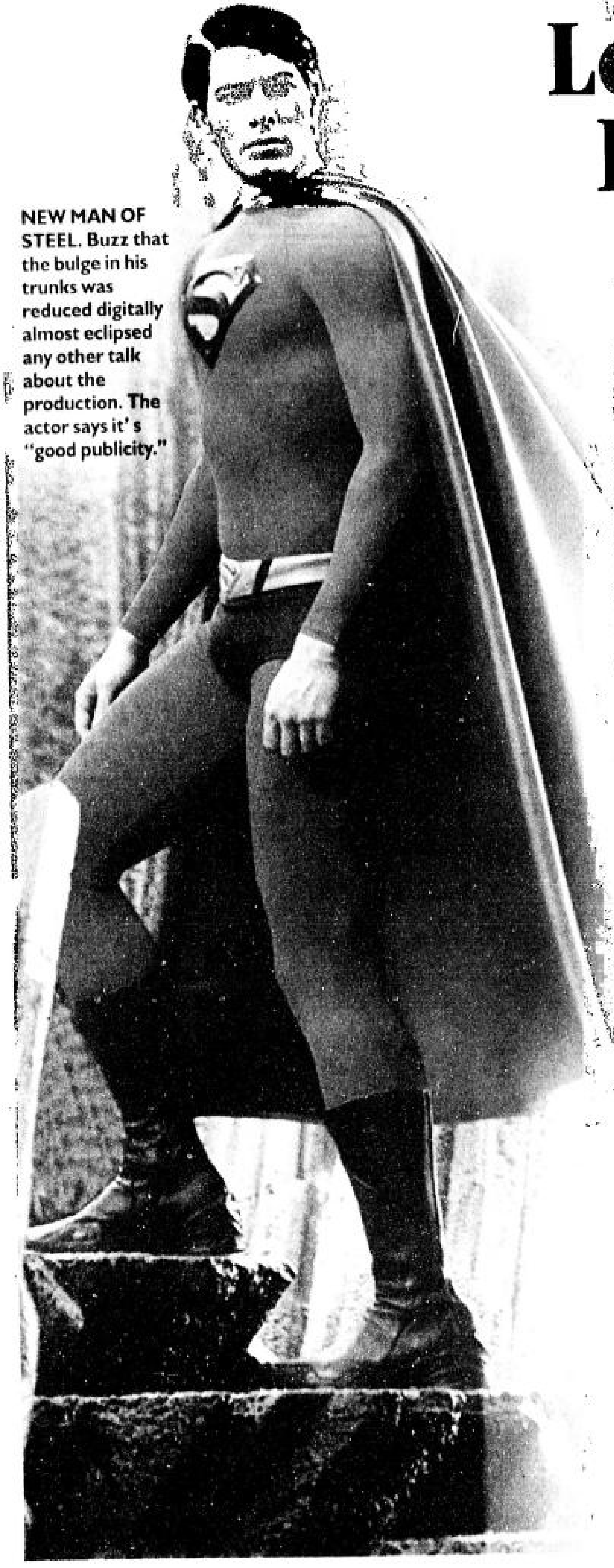
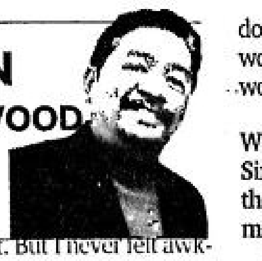
Look! Up on the screen! It's Superman!



NEW MAN OF STEEL. Buzz that the bulge in his trunks was reduced digitally almost eclipsed any other talk about the production. The actor says it's "good publicity."



ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—THE FIRST time we met **Brandon Routh** ("Rhymes with south," he told us), the new Superman, was at one of the Golden Globe post-parties last January.

Standing in a hallway at the Beverly Hills Hilton Hotel, Brandon, wearing a black suit, reminded us immediately of the late **Christopher Reeve**. Tall, with classic good looks and a model's jaw, Brandon stood in line to get into the party. But with the release of "Superman Returns," a $250 million plus production marking the return of the Man of Steel, doors will start magically opening up for him from now on.

You may have seen the 6' 3" tall actor in the 2000 season of MTV's sexually charged soap "Undressed," **Christina Aguilera**'s "What A Girl Wants" video, "Gilmore Girls" and as Seth Anderson on the daytime soap, "One Life to Live."

Filmed in LA and Australia, "Superman Returns" also stars **Kevin Spacey, Kate Bosworth** as Lois Lane, **James Marsden, Frank Langella, Eva Marie Saint and Parker Posey**. As a kid in his native Iowa, he remembers being so excited to watch one of the "Superman" movies of Christopher Reeve that he threw up.

In the following interview, Brandon, speaking with the charm and modesty of a man who grew up in a small town in the American Midwest, talks openly about his life—which will surely change with "Superman Returns"—and issues hounding his Man of Steel.

For a while, buzz about his manhood being so, er, mammoth that the bulge in his red trunks had to be digitally reduced, almost eclipsed any other talk about the production. For the record, although Brandon put on 20 plus pounds of muscle for his big role, the new Superman suit comes with extra padded muscles, a patented bulge flattener and a cup to make protuberances minimum. So parents, don't worry. This is a wholesome Superman.

Can you talk about recent articles pointing to Superman as a gay icon?

When people see the movie, they can see that the film is obviously about Superman and his relationship with Lois. On Superman as a gay icon, he is an icon for all walks of life, all countries, all races and all religions. People who don't like Superman are the ones who really frighten me (laughter).

When George Clooney portrayed Batman, much ado was made about his Batman suit haying nipples. Does the Superman suit have nipples, too?

Yes, Superman has nipples, too. You just don't see them but it wasn't that funny. Sorry, guys. The first time I put on the suit, it was a little awkward because I was in a room full of costume designers and people nitpicking the suit. But I never felt awkward in it. It's such a great update of the original classic suit that I was really proud to be able to wear it. It's very powerful, especially with the cape and the boots. It's very commanding. You feel very kingly so I was very proud of it.

What about the stories that they have to digitally reduce the bulge in your red trunks?

It was not brought to my attention during filming that it was an issue. It's only an issue with journalists and people who want to make a fun story about it. It is good publicity, though.

Were you a fan of Superman before you got this role?

As a kid, I was a huge Superman fan. "Superman," the movie, came out the year before I was born, so Superman was all over at that time. I watched the film when I was five or six. I had my Superman pajamas on and I was jumping in my parents' living room and around the house, flying and annoying the heck out of my mother, I am sure. I ended up getting a migraine. I was so excited that half of the time the movie was being shown, I was throwing up. That feeling of Superman as a kid stayed with me. I didn't read the comics as a kid.

I watched the Christopher Reeve Superman movies so many times as a kid. I knew everything that Christopher Reeve did in those films so his spirit and his presence were always with me throughout the filming. He was my Superman. He will always be on my mind.

You will now be instantly famous all over the world. Do you have an idea how that will be like?

I can imagine what fame is going to be like but I will just take it one step at a time. This is something different from what I have experienced before so I am learning from this experience and what I have learned will be a big payoff for me in the future. Superman is hugely popular. I feel like I'm prepared in a way. I am going to take on everything else with an open mind and a smile on my face.

Are you aware that from now on you will always be known as Superman? Do you stay in shape because filming of the sequel is just around the corner?

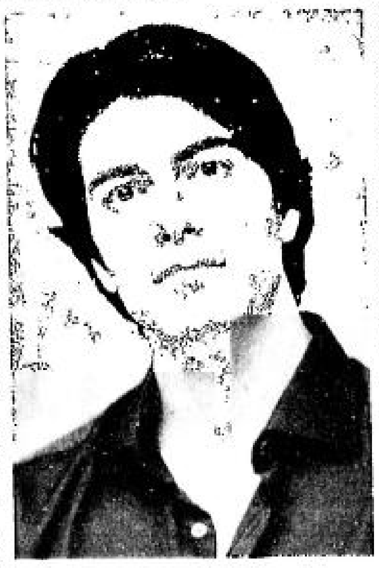
I've thought about being always known as Superman from hereon. What a fantastic thing. It's a great legacy. I'll be able to do great things outside of the film business as well because of this character. I still work out but not as much. Not six days a week like I was doing before. And I don't have to get up at 4 a.m. to work out which was awesome. I am working out three days a week now.

Why do you think director Bryan Singer did not tell you right away that he wanted you to be Superman?

Bryan would have liked to tell me very early on that he wanted me to have the role. But he did not have the final vote. He would have relieved me of my anxiety to get the role.

Describe the moment when you were actually told the role was yours.

I found out before it was released to the media. I told my parents and my family but, during that time, it was very close to Chris' passing. We all wanted to make sure that there was a gradual transition so that it didn't feel like we were on the coattails of anything. It wasn't long after that, that people found out. But my parents did have to keep the secret. People from all over were showing up to talk about the role and to ask. They showed up in Iowa asking my parents if I had the role. They got the brunt of it more than I did because nobody knew where I was. I was hiding out.



BRANDON Routh during this interview with members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

Were you able to concentrate and get on with your life after you landed the role? Did you worry that the movie might not be made?

It was pretty much the only thing in my mind. I continued bartending and doing what I needed to survive.

You said that Christopher Reeve was like a super hero to you. When he died and his wife Dana died too, how did you feel?

Both Chris and Dana were really amazing people. I didn't have the opportunity to meet them in person. I feel like Chris' spirit and what he brought to the character really does live in this film through me because he was an amazing inspiration to me. Dana sent me a very nice note halfway through filming, giving her blessing to the film and to me. She remarked about my resemblance to Chris and that she thought that was neat. It was great to know that we were not doing something against her wishes. It was very important and as far as people are thinking that I resemble Chris, that is a great compliment.

Can you tell us a bit more about Dana's note and did she also send you a Superman pendant?

Yes, she sent two "Go Forward" pendants and key chains. I gave one of the key chains to my father which he proudly wears. Those things are to raise money and awareness for the Chris Reeve Paralysis Foundation. The nice handwritten note from Dana expressed her happiness that there was this film being made. She mentioned that she had met Bryan before and that she was confident that Bryan would do a great job. She also thought it was cool that I looked like Chris.

How do you plan to avoid the pitfalls of fame? Describe your lifestyle.

People always tell me, especially since I come from a small town, "Don't change." They are so afraid that I am going to start acting like a hotshot or a bad-mannered celebrity. I will listen to that but I am also going to change a lot in very positive ways. I am very comfortable about who I am. I am very confident in the way I live my life. As far as lifestyle is concerned, my girlfriend and I just want to sit and watch movies. Our favorite thing to do is to watch or listen to the audio commentary on DVDs. I hang out with my friends and I play basketball. All that glitz and glamour start to be the same after a while. You see the same people, and celebrities just become normal people after a while. It sometimes feels more like a show and you don't have fun when you are doing stuff like that. I do things that are appealing to me and that's not always going out to clubs because the music is so loud and I feel like saying, "Could you turn the music down? I am trying to have a conversation with somebody."

Did you get to keep one Superman costume?

No, I didn't. I don't have room for one right now. I don't have a big house in Hollywood Hills (laughter). I have so much Superman memorabilia already that a mannequin of me with a suit on wouldn't fit—plus, it would be scary at this time to wake up and see that mannequin.

Can you talk about your girlfriend?

Courtney Ford is my girlfriend of two and a half years. We met at the Lucky Strike bowling bar where I was bartending. Her brother was having his wedding rehearsal there so I was giving him shots of tequila. I met the entire family that day. I ended up getting her phone number. We had our first date two days later. We went to a dinner and to a show of my sister, Sarah, who is a musician. Sarah has a track on the companion soundtrack of the movie.

Is Courtney an actress?

Yes, she's an actress and a producer. We have a film that she produced and that we both starred in. It's called "Denial" and it's about the challenge one man has to take. He has to decide between the woman of his dreams and reality. It is so different from "Superman."

How did Courtney react when you told her that you were going to be Superman? Are her expectations higher as far as sweeping her off her feet?

I would like to think

SUPERMAN/ A2-4

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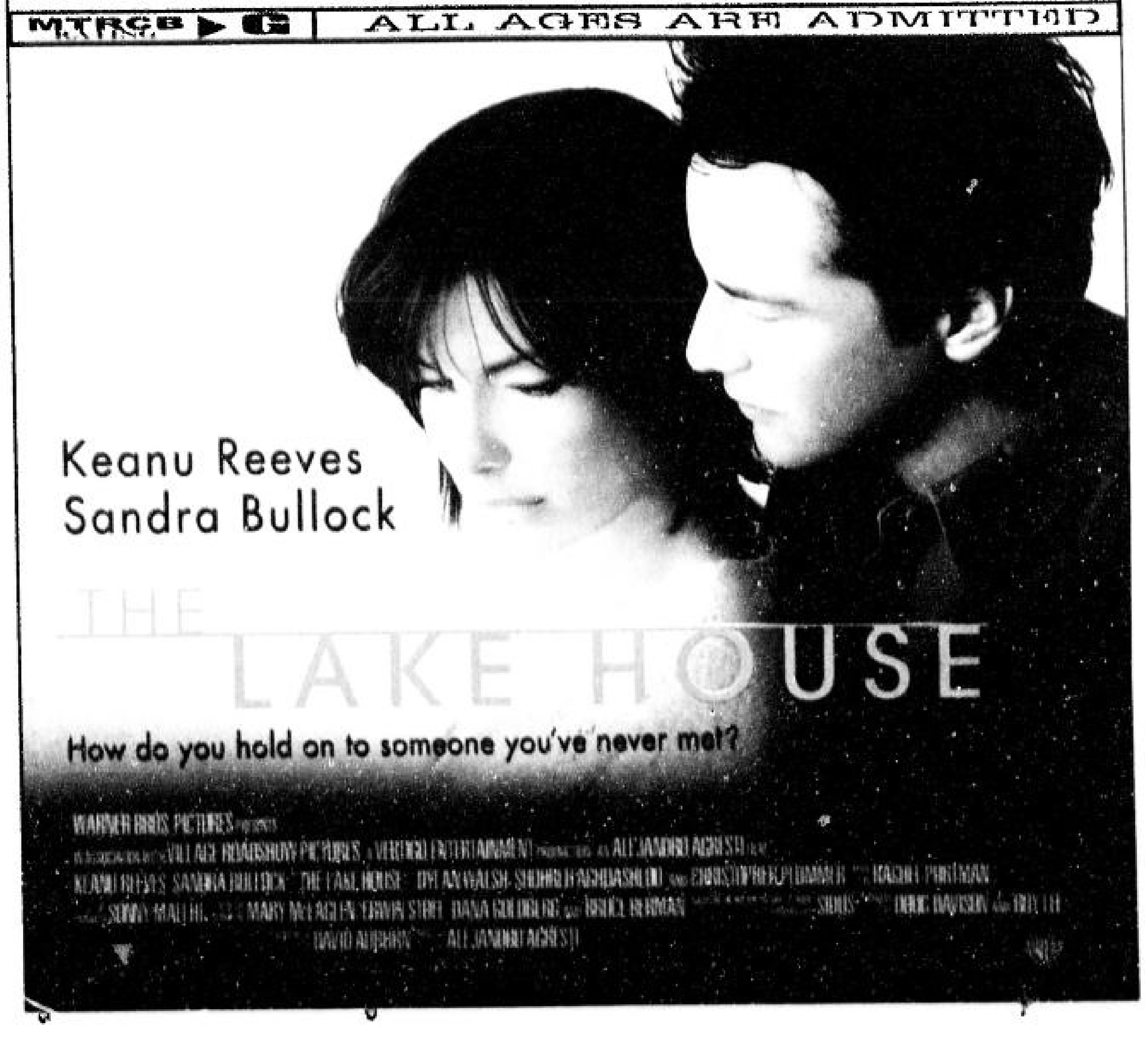

STARS Living
Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**
sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Welcome to the lifestyle of SHOWBIZ CELEBS

OUR FAVORITE CELebrities welcome us into their homes, show us their favorite nooks and throw open their closets. They tell us about the books at their bedside, allow us to get to know their pets.

They take us to their parties, bring us on behind-the-scenes pictorials and location shoots, share with us their shining moments or, maybe sometimes, even their most outrageous (hilarious?).

Can't get any better than this.

Fridays, starting today, Stars Living gives you an all-access pass.

THE SEXIER, THE BETTER
The rules of the game, according to Pilita Corrales: 1) A singer should sparkle; 2) Better to suffer in high heels than to look flat in flats; 3) Go for stretchables—the sexier the better. More in Out of the Closet continued on page A2/3.

INSIDE
▨ Geneva's favorite nook, Heart's book /A3-4

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CESAR Montano, Joyce Bernal, Martin Makalintal, Tony Gloria and Sunshine Cruz PHOTOS BY JONATHAN CAYAON

TOMMY Abuel, Mel Martinez, Elijah Castillo, Christine Dayrit, Ferdinand Lapuz and Brillante Mendoza

Celebrating industry bigwigs

CHINGGOY Alonso

ROY Iglesias

PARTY! PARTY!

JUST HOW BIG, THE BIGWIGS?

Industry stalwarts like National Artist for Film Eddie Romero and wife Carolina, Regal matriarch Lily Monteverde, actor Cesar Montano and wife Sunshine Cruz, Unitel producer Tony Gloria, "Pinoy Big Brother" graduate Rustom Padilla and "Masahista" director Brillante Mendoza trooped to Mezze Bar and Restaurant in Greenbelt Makati, to attend the party thrown by Bobong Velez for Christine Dayrit, chair of the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB) and the International Film Festival Commission (Iffcom), and Jacky Atienza, head of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP).

The welcome committee consisted of big names, too—new Iffcom directors Vincent del Rosario of Viva Films, Manet Dayrit of Roadrunner, filmmaker Tikoy Aguiluz, Martin Makalintal of the French Embassy and Jun Juban of the international production house Philippine Film Studio.

The only Iffcom directors not around that night were Bienvenido Lumbera, National Artist for Literature, and Edu Jarque of the Department of Tourism.

Also present were CEB members—filmmaker Joyce Bernal, TV host Butch Francisco, scriptwriter-director Clodualdo del Mundo Jr., actors Tommy Abuel and Chinggoy Alonso and screenwriter Roy Iglesias.

Other VIP guests were Marlon, Rowena and Andrea Bautista of Imus Productions, writer-director Yam Laranas, filmmaker Quark Henares and his mom Dr. Vicki Belo, Msgr. Nico Bautista of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, Maloli Espinosa of ABS-CBN, fashion director Robby Carmona, international sales agent Ferdinand Lapuz, among others.

"Pepot Artista" child star Elijah Castillo, Best Actor at the Singapore International Film Festival, won a gift card from Miladay during the raffle.

Some boys have all the luck.

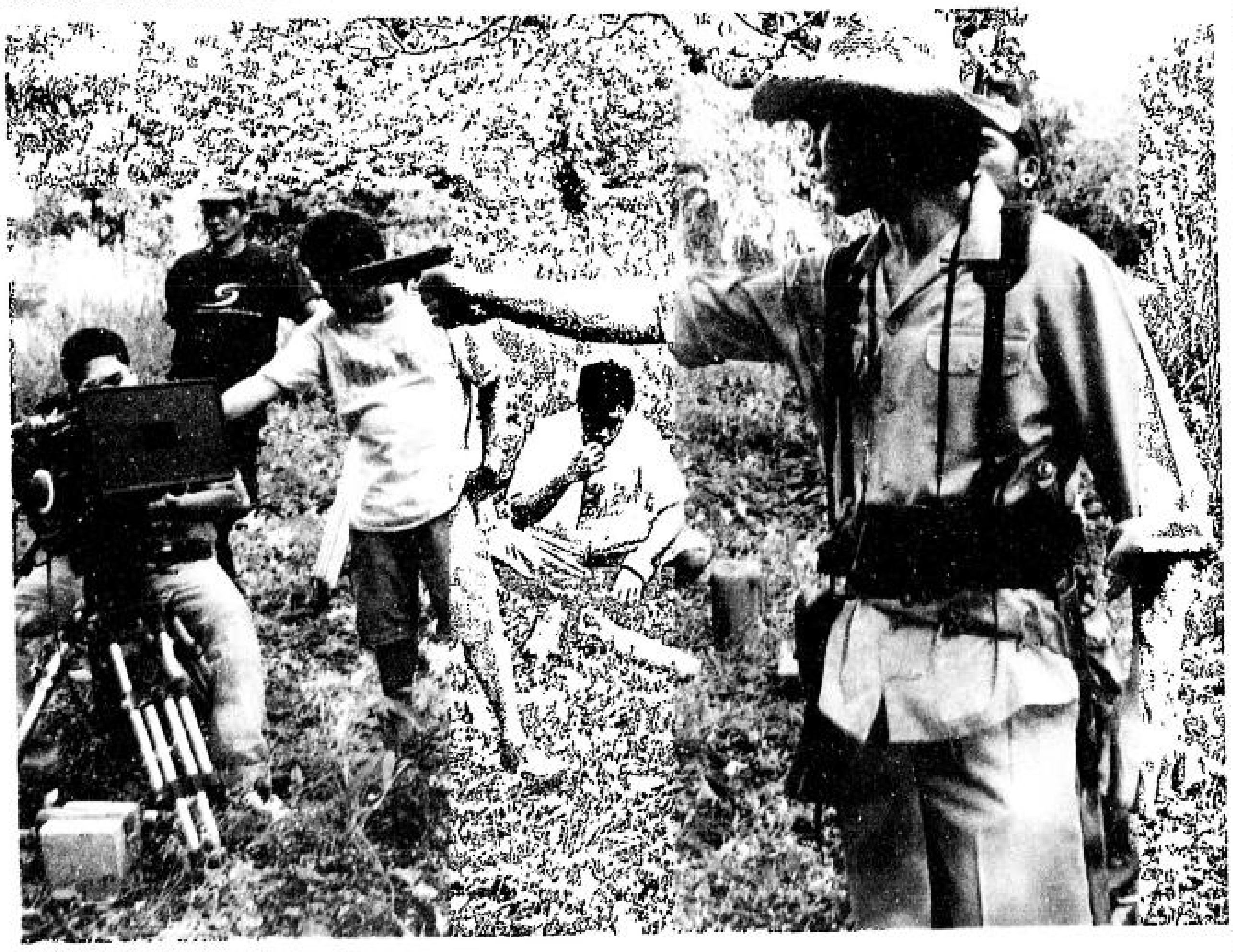
MANET Dayrit, Christine Dayrit, Yam Laranas and Vincent del Rosario

LILY Monteverde

CAROLINA and Eddie Romero

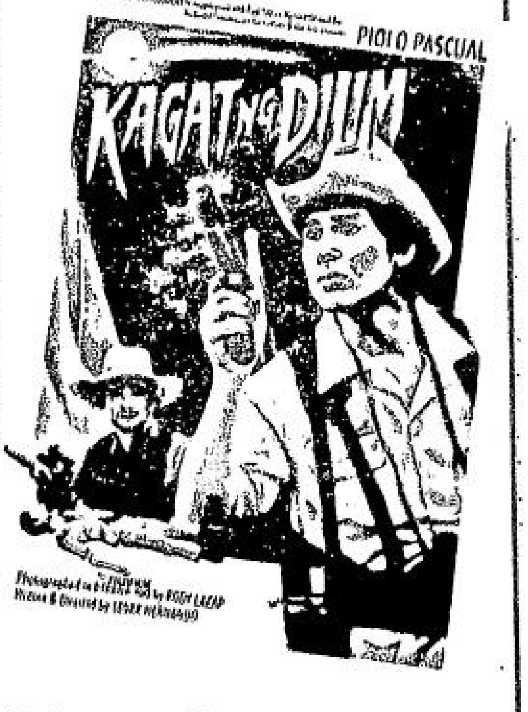
BUTCH Francisco and Vicki Belo

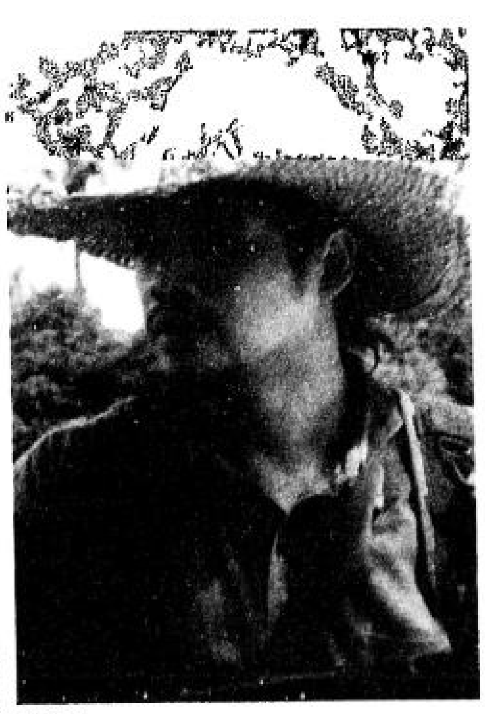
ROEDER Camañag



PIOLO as Ka Serafin

MOVIE poster by CJ de Silva





YUL Servo

Piolo on his first indie
How could I go wrong?

SNEAK PEEK

AWARD-WINNING MATINEE IDOL PIOLO PASCUAL plays a Huk guerrilla in "Kagat ng Dilim," a 15-minute film written and directed by Cesar Hernando. This is Piolo's first short film and also his first foray into independent cinema. It premiered May 31 at MyCinema in Greenbelt 3.

The audience consisted of directors, cinematographers, students, other filmmakers, advertising practitioners, artists, the entertainment press, and film enthusiasts.

These photographs were taken on the set of the movie (in Tanay), which will be shown in UP Diliman in August.

"Kagat ng Dilim" is set in the 1950s. Piolo plays Ka Serafin, leader of a troop that patrols the mountains of Central Luzon. Conflict ensues when the troop members mysteriously fall one by one, all with strange bite marks on their necks.

Hernando says the story is fiction based on facts.

"Direk Cesar's offer came at the right time," said Piolo. "I had always wanted to do something different."

He said he had been intrigued by the script and thrilled at the opportunity to work with, aside from Hernando, director of photography Rody Lacap, film editor Jess Navarro, art director Danny Red, sound designer Erwin Romulo, and musical directors Lorrie Illustre and Malek Lopez.

"*Lahat sila batikan; saan ka pa* (They're the best; how could I go wrong)?" Piolo says, smiling.

'Director Cesar Hernando's offer came at the right time. I had always wanted to do something different'

CESAR Hernando (center) directs Piolo Pascual and Katrina Garcia

RUBEN de Jesus and Piolo in a crucial scene

CESAR (second from right) and the Huks (from left) Danny Red, Jun Videz, Ernie Cloma, Jess Evardone and Piolo. Seated from left, Mike Lloren and Roeder

BELT with matching watch and earrings gifts from her good friend German Moreno.

Bending over backwards to sing and SPARKLE

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

OUT OF THE CLOSET

SINGING WITH HER top half-bent back—and rotating east to west to east—is a Pilita Corrales trademark. But not many know that Asia's Queen of Songs finds it difficult to sing when not wearing high heels.

"Bending helps me hit high notes, and high-heeled shoes help me keep my balance," Pilita said in an interview at her home in New Manila, Quezon City. "Let's put that at three and a half inches or higher."

The Cebuano beauty—and, everybody knows, an international celebrity—admits that her shoes are not the most comfortable to wear. "I'm willing to suffer for many hours just so I can wear them," she said. "When it comes to shoes, comfort is only secondary for me."

During INQUIRER Entertainment's visit on Tuesday, Pilita showed to us some of the most memorable pairs in her shoe collection.

The singer also allowed us a peek into her collection of gowns, and gave us tips on how best to take care of such valuable pieces.

"My clothes can no longer fit in my closet," Pilita said. "I've had to ask our carpenter to make wooden stands to hang my gowns on. Some are in the hallway. Those I use for my TV show ("Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita," GMA 7), I fold and put in boxes."

Asia's Queen of Songs is scheduled to fly to Las Vegas for a show on July 15. She will be in San Diego on July 18, in San Francisco on July 20, in Sacramento on July 21.

Meanwhile, Pilita is one of the three judges in the reality talent search, "Philippine Idol," on ABC 5.

BAGS, from daughter Jackie Lou

SHOES

I bought a lot of my shoes in Las Vegas. That's where you find great show shoes. There are many things you find in Las Vegas that you can't find anywhere else in the United States—the stuff made for show girls or people who perform on stage.

I wear either very, very flat shoes or really high ones. For performing, they have to be really, really high.

On "Lagot Ka," I wear high heels shoes only because the boys (Benjie Paras, Joey Marquez and Richard Gomez) are all very tall. For example, if I'm wearing flats and I talk with Benjie, *nakatingala na ako*. I wear flats only when the director says my character will be coming from her bedroom or from the bathroom.

Honestly, some of the shoes I wear for shows are really uncomfortable. But since I like the shoes, I am willing to suffer.

This pair (brown high-heeled, high-cut leather boots) was given to me by a producer of my show in San Bernardino, California. When I'm in the US, I'm always in suits. She knew that I'd been looking for the perfect boots for a long time but couldn't find any in the Philippines.

GOWNS

I wore this when I performed at the Carnegie Hall (shows a black velvet gown with sequins and beads). I don't remember who made this. I also have one in silver. This was provided by the producer. It's very, very heavy. I don't wear this anymore, although I'm still thinking… if I want to wear it again, I would have to change the beadwork. They're not as shiny anymore.

I still wear this (fully-beaded, royal blue stretchable gown). I first used this in my show at the Lincoln Center in New York. I bought this in the United States. I like it because it looks beautiful on stage, because of the color of the fabric and the beads.

This one (black long-sleeved velvet gown with beads and lace) I first wore in a show at the MGM Mirage in Las Vegas. It was the show I did with Carmen Soriano, also my last show with (the late singer-comedian) Bert Marcelo. Carmen and I wore the same design, Muslim-inspired. Mine was black and hers was white.

This orange crochet gown with sequins is very revealing. I have to wear a beige bathing suit and body stockings under it. It's handmade, and doesn't need ironing. I can just roll it and put it inside my bag. I've wore this many times.

The black dress with gold embroidery is by Danilo Franco. I wore this in a show at the Sydney Opera House in Australia. The slit is at the side and goes all the way up. *Pinahabaan ko pa ang slit*. I wore this for a commercial recently. The producer liked it.

Velvet is great. You can use and reuse it. You can just redo the embroidery if you don't like it anymore. *Hindi ka na gagastos nang malaki*. Gowns are very expensive these days.

I prefer all my gowns to be stretchable. Since I'm a singer, it's important that I can breathe properly. It's also important that I can walk comfortably while on stage.

Since I wear a lot of see-through dresses, most of them have built-in camisole, or bra and shorts, so I don't need underwear. Everything is attached to the gown. This works well especially when I need to change outfits during a show. No zippers. I just pull it on.

I sweat a lot on stage. So we dry the gowns under the sun before sending them to the dry cleaner. But if a gown has been dry-cleaned two or three times, *nawawala na ang* luster. That's when I stop wearing them.

Before hanging them, I put my gowns inside plastic bags. This prevents the beads from snagging.

Fully beaded and see-through dresses have become my trademark. This is because I work in big theaters. You have to have a little bit of sparkle if you perform in Las Vegas or any big theater, otherwise, *walang* effect. If you're wearing dresses of plain fabrics, you at least have to have a big brooch.

Gowns nowadays are made of plain fabrics; but I think those are better for television.

TOPS

The stuff I wear for television is really very casual. I cannot wear very revealing tops on TV since I play mother to four big boys in the comedy series. Unless I'm asked to wear something different—like for the episode with Dingdong Dantes, when my children think I'm in love with him—I wear a sexy top with mini skirt. Most of the time, the outfit is toned-down.

Personally, the sexier, the better. I'm used to wearing tight-fitting outfits. I never wear sleeveless clothes, though. I always go for long-sleeves or elbow-length sleeves.

PANTS

Even jeans—I like them stretchable. That is so I don't have a hard time sitting down and getting up.

Plain-color pants are best for long-hours of taping. *Palit na lang nang palit ang* blouse. I have all colors of pants to match all kinds of tops.

BAGS

Gold and silver-colored bags, as well as beaded bags are the "in" thing these days. These bags were gifts from my daughter Jackie Lou.

I only have one rule in buying bags: they have to be big enough to accommodate all my things. I cannot use small ones, even when I just go to private dinners. I want to be able to put all my things in one bag.

A bag doesn't have to match my outfit. I don't really buy that many bags here. I buy my bags abroad. But if I find something that I like in some *tiangge* here—whether it's fake or not—I buy it.

ACCESSORIES

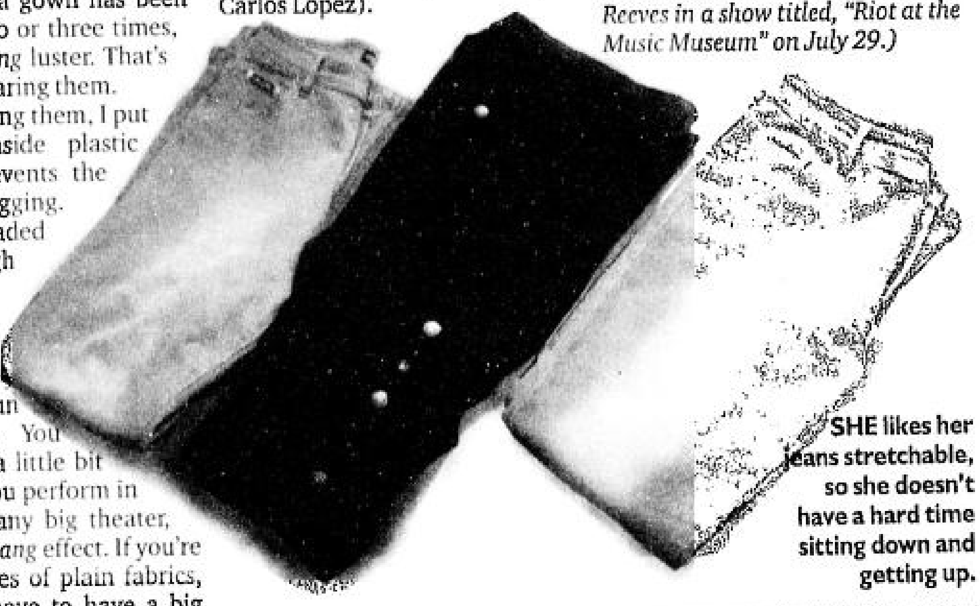
This belt made up of colorful stones was given to me by German Moreno. It has a matching watch and earrings. He brought it in the Middle East. A lot of my friends say they like this belt.

This studded necklace and its matching earrings were gifts from my husband (businessman Carlos Lopez).

STUDDED necklace is a gift from husband Carlos.

I don't like wearing really big accessories, especially on TV. I prefer simple ones. Nowadays, you can buy a lot of these here. The key is just to match them with the right outfit.

(Pilita will be performing with her children Jackie Lou Blanco and Ramon Christopher; and comedians Elizabeth Ramsey and Keanna Reeves in a show titled, "Riot at the Music Museum" on July 29.)



SHE likes her jeans stretchable, so she doesn't have a hard time sitting down and getting up.

HIGH-HEELED shoes—"three and a half inches or higher"—help her keep her balance.

"YOU have to have a little bit of sparkle if you perform in big theaters, otherwise, *walang* effect," says Pilita, who has sung at Carnegie Hall, MGM Mirage and Lincoln Center.

ORANGE hand-made crochet gown has to be worn with body stocking.

GOLD gown with built-in camisole, or bra and shorts. No zippers.

A DANILO Franco number, first worn at the Sydney Opera House.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

In this corner...

FAVORITE NOOKS

GENEVA CRUZ

I spend a lot of time fixing myself in this corner. This is the first place I go to when I wake up, after I take a bath, and before I leave for work. This is where I put all the stuff I use for work, like my Mac lipstick and lip liner, or Lancome gloss that I really like. Also on my dresser is Jessica Simpson's Dessert Beauty line. I have her edible body cream in choco-coconut flavor. You apply it on your skin, put some candy sprinkles and... lick it.

Marinel R. Cruz

A *'deity'* in coco and piña fabrics

SHOW STOPPER

By Angela Blardony Ureta
Contributor

THE ENTRANCE HALL OF THE celebrated Miho Museum in Japan (an hour and a half southeast of Kyoto) was filled with strains of indigenous Filipino cradle on May 28. Filipino singer-actress Chin-Chin Gutierrez was performing songs from her award-winning album, "Uyayi: A Collection of Philippine Lullabies."

Against a panoramic view of the Shigaraki mountain range, Chin-Chin regaled an audience of over 200 VIP guests, for whom it must have been a first taste of Philippine culture.

Chin-Chin was personally invited to perform by museum benefactress Hiroko Koyama—president of Shinji Shumekai and chair of the Shumei Culture Foundation—after meeting her in Manila last January. Koyama said she had been impressed with Chin-Chin's "spirituality, respect for nature, and expression of beauty through art."

She said Chin-Chin, an advocate of ecology and cultural heritage, "exudes a character that is fine and pure, capable of elevating the hearts and minds of her fellowmen."

The Miho Museum, designed by renowned architect I.M. Pei, houses over 2,000 pieces of Western and Asian artifacts. Art critics from all over the world have hailed the museum as a "haven for the senses and the soul," not only for its magnificent edifice but also because of its impressive collection of ceremonial and religious objet d'art.

To the delight of her audience, Chin-Chin ended the performance with a lyrical rendition, in flawless Nihongo, of "Sakura"—accompanied by the Shumei Taiko Ensemble—and the Miho Museum's theme song, "The World of Beauty."

Chin-Chin was garbed in a Filipino attire woven from pineapple, coconut and banana fibers, with shoes and accessories made from braided water lilies, created by Davao-based designer Garimon Roferos. Guests remarked that she reminded them of a luminous Tennyo (celestial deity), whose captivating beauty matched her melodious voice.

The next day, Chin-Chin performed her Uyayi repertoire before a crowd of over 400 men, women and children, to inaugurate the Shigaraki no Sato open-air theater, built along the mountain slopes that surrounded Shumei's natural agriculture farm.

"It is really through preserving nature and art that one remembers his spirit," Chin-Chin said of her unique experience in Shiga. "And it is the spirit that recognizes, rebuilds and sustains the world of beauty that we all long for, transcending barriers of language, race or creed."

CHIN-CHIN Gutierrez sings "Sakura" with the Shumei Taiko Ensemble, left. Her gown was created by Davao designer Garimon Roferos. Her sandals were made of braided water lilies.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Star & Siam

TAIL TALES

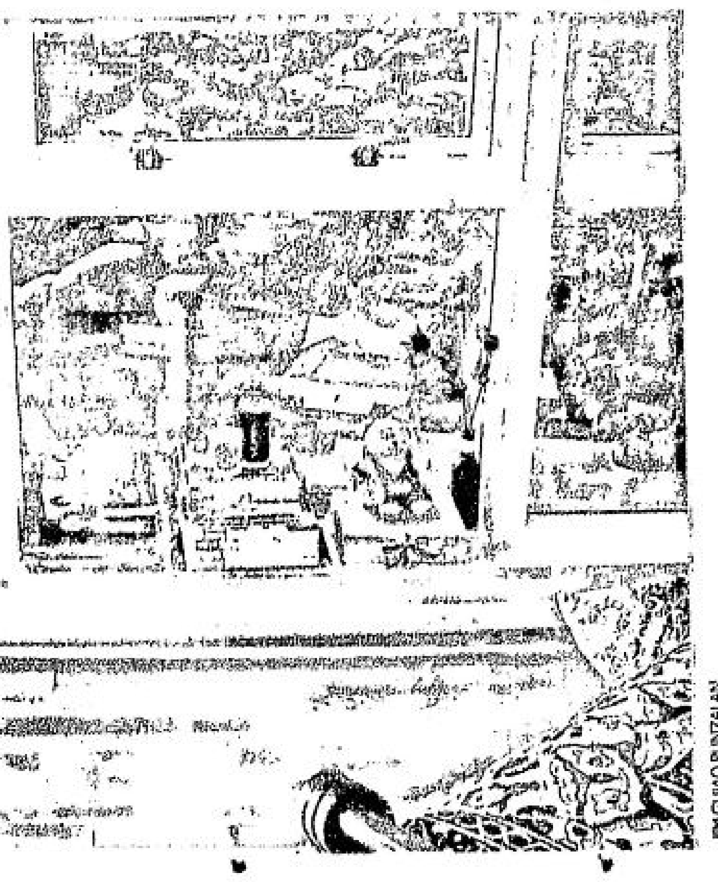
ERIK SANTOS

I own two toy dogs—Star is a Pomeranian Spitz, Siam is a Dachshund. A friend gave Siam to me right after I won the grand prize in "Star in a Million" in January of 2004. I named him after the show. Star came in a year after. She was already 3 years old when I brought her home. I really pamper them. I make sure they eat only branded dog food—Pedigree for Siam and Cesar for Star. A fan, who is a veterinarian, gives them vitamins and makes sure they get their vaccines on time.

I don't bring them to work. Since they're very small dogs, they get pinched a lot. *Nakakaawa.* I play with them at home whenever I have time.

Star, who knows how to climb the stairs, goes to my room and sleeps under my bed.

Marinel R. Cruz



JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

'Just enough light'

BOOKS

HEART EVANGELISTA

I'm reading Stormie Omartian's "Just Enough Light for the Step I'm On." It's the perfect book for a baby [Born Again] Christian like me. It's a collection of devotional readings, perfect for people experiencing changes in their lives. This helped me handle intrigues well. I came out of a really bad experience unharmed. My good image remained intact.

(Heart was referring to her battle with tabloid news that she was pregnant by a man other than her current boyfriend, Jericho Rosales. She said she had heard rumors that she had an abortion, too.)

Marinel R. Cruz

CHERI MERCADO

ABC 5 news anchor's books range from "Rich Dad, Poor Dad" to "The Da Vinci Code" and "What to Expect the First Year."

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4-month OFW remittances up 10.8% to $3.7B

Growth in April slowest in 17 months

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 17 MONTHS, THE growth in overseas Filipino workers' remittances fell below double-digit levels at 0.34 percent in April to $899 million from a year ago due to the shrinking number of new workers deployed abroad, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

Since November 2004, monthly OFW inflows posted double-digit growths year-on-year and even hit an eight-year high of $1.04 billion last March as remittances jumped 15.6 percent.

"Nonetheless, the cumulative January-to-April remittance level of $3.7 billion posted a double-digit growth of 10.8 percent compared to the same period last year and the 10-percent growth projected for 2006," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. announced yesterday.

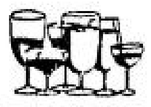
The slower growth in remittances for the first four months of the year was attributed to the reduction in the total number of deployed overseas workers. Citing preliminary data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) on new hires and rehires from January to April this year, Tetangco said the total number of deployed workers fell 2.7 percent to 359,402.

The number of land-based workers, which comprised 74.7 percent of total deployed OFWs, dropped by 5.8 percent to 268,637 while newly deployed sea-based workers were higher by 8 percent at 90,765.

"Partly compensating for the effect of the contraction in the number of deployed workers was the sustained aggressive marketing campaigns conducted by local banks such as client giveaways, better of-

4-MONTH/ B2

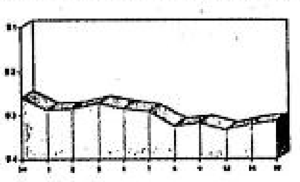
WHAT'S INSIDE



Oscar's winner /B2

13 Mindanao projects worth P1.58B get perks /B12

INDICATORS



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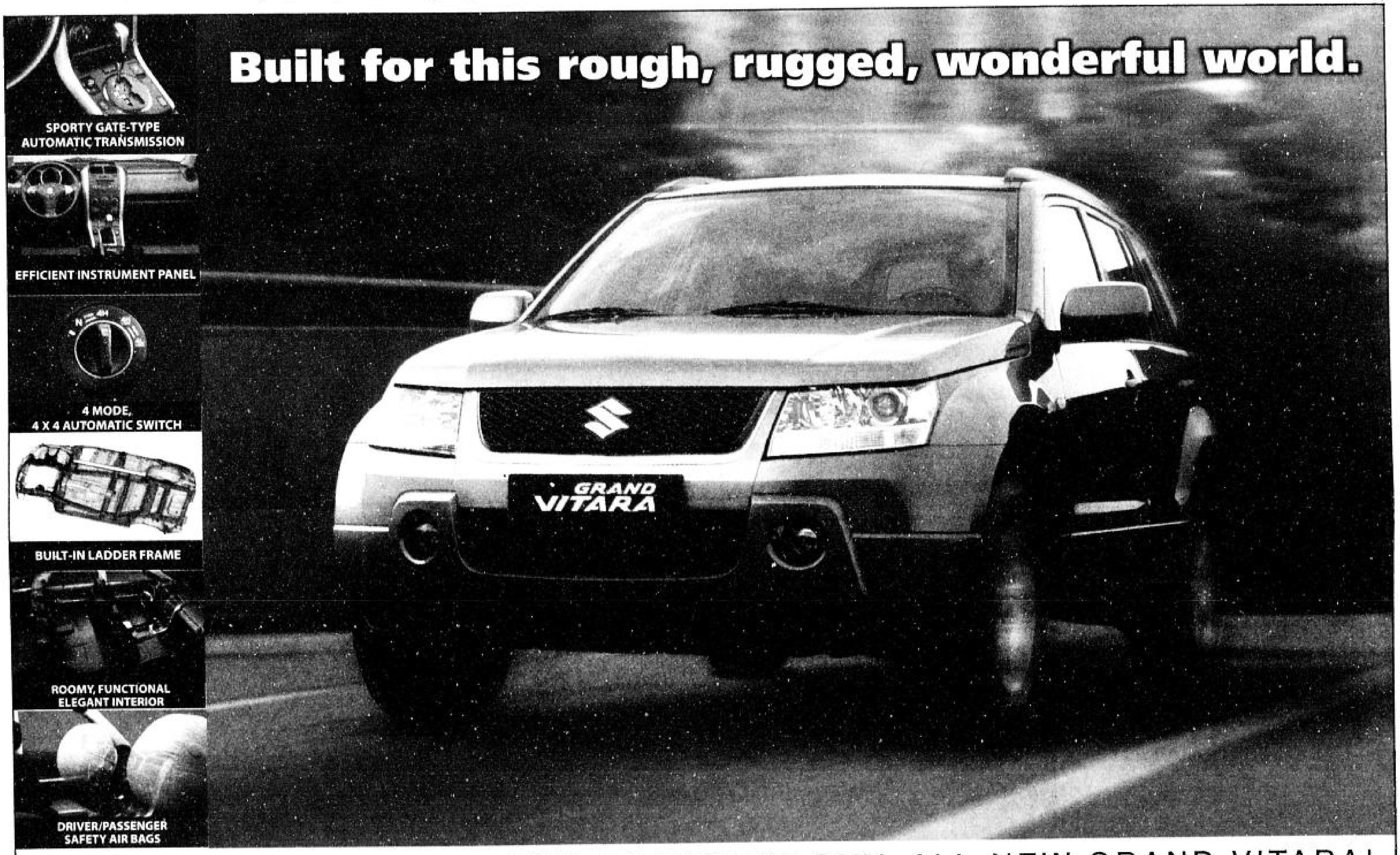
Shares recover slightly

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.72-PERCENT higher yesterday as investors picked up bar-

SHARES/ B2



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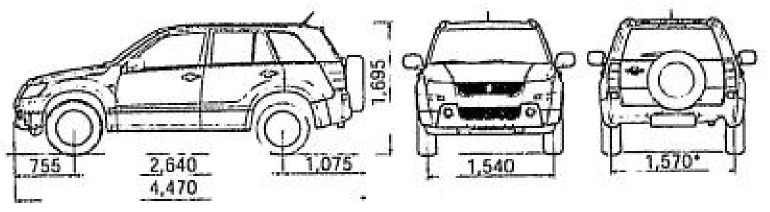

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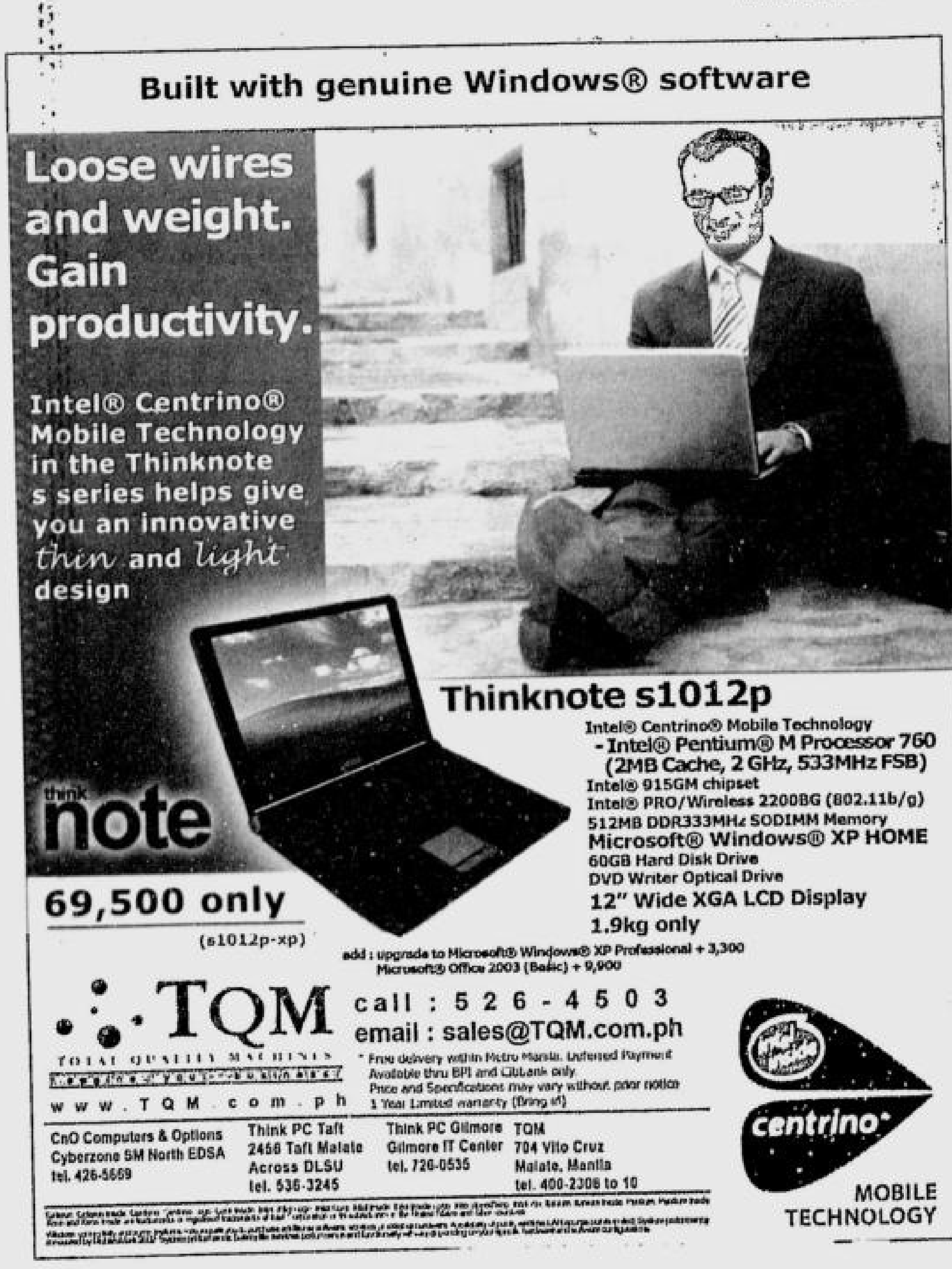
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IT HAS ONLY 48 REGULAR EMPLOYEES—9 officers, 17 managers and 12 supervisors to order around 10 rank-and-file personnel—yet its first year of operations has cranked out P1.5 billion in profits on revenues of P5.1 billion.

In these tough, competitive times, that represents a clean, devaluation-proof 29.4-percent margin. Welcome to Manila North Tollways Corp., the Lopez-controlled developer and operator of the North Luzon Expressway and related arteries that is now the object of buy-in affections from Manuel V. Pangilinan and his Metro Pacific Group.

Another Lopez affiliate, which operates and maintains the NLEX proper, turned in P217.5 million in profits on first year revenues of P1.3 billion, or a respectable 16.7-percent spread.

Despite the healthy returns, First Philippine Holdings chair Oscar Lopez told shareholders Wednesday that traffic numbers were still "below expectations," partly as a result of the higher toll rates and more so because of soaring fuel prices.

Out of the P5.1 billion in revenues, P3.4 billion came from tollway fees; the balance came from the so-called access fees paid by oil companies that established gas stations and strip malls ever since the Lopezes took over the 84-kilometer expressway and discarded the government's "pay-peanuts, get-potholes" operating philosophy.

Next year, MNTC will begin work on phase 2, which would connect the NLEX with C-5 and the South Luzon Expressway, and eventually link up the Luzon arterial backbone with the Subic-Clark-Tarlac road, another Lopez project, and the US-era McArthur Highway.

If needed, First Philippine Holdings still has plenty of wiggle room to raise debt capital to match a buy-in offer from the Metro Pacific Group to acquire the 32.9-percent stake held by foreign partners.

Still, with or without a hostile suitor, First Philippine shareholders can already expect cash dividends from the tollway operations by yearend, Lopez promised.

More would be forthcoming should the company also win the management and operation of the Clark-Subic-Tarlac segment, and the C-5 connecting road, as well as other large-scale infrastructure projects.

Together with power-generating conglomerate First Gen, "we have a business base that is capable of generating attractive profits and cash flow even when one major component such as Meralco has a difficult year," Lopez said, as First Philippine celebrated its 20th year of return and rehabilitation from the Marcos era.

With the ouster of the Marcoses in 1986 and the return of the conglomerate to the family that also owns ABS-CBN, First Philippine Holdings has enjoyed a 21-percent compounded annual growth in the last two decades.

Given its heft and experience, First Philippine Holdings is now setting its sights on the regional market, with subsidiary Philec supplying locally made electric transformers, first to Guam, under the "Cooper" brand.

(Moral of the story: You don't want to pay taxes and tolls to an incompetent government, fine; now, go and hand over your money to the Lopezes, the Indonesians, the Malaysians, the French and the Australians.)

No berth from Romulo

FOREIGN Secretary Alberto Romulo claims that his December 2005 decision to terminate a P1-billion contract for the digital passport project has the go-ahead from the Department of Justice.

The problem is, the DOJ opinion was only issued May 31, 2006, a good five months after contract termination.

In canceling the project, Romulo claims that the proponent, BCA International, did not have enough capital despite BCA already having finished phase 1 and spending P304 million for the build-operate-transfer project.

Unlike the Lopezes who had been allowed to borrow up to 68 percent of the North Luzon Expressway project cost, Romulo disallowed a BCA proposal to invite foreign partners to acquire or raise debt up to 49 percent of the passport venture.

But then again, BCA's two partners, Aderito Yujuico and Bonifacio Sumbilla, have no political and business gravitas a la Lopez, with the two mainly relying on their native and professional talents in putting forward what they had thought was an unassailable bid.

The other ex-partner, Cesar Quiambao (he represented the "C" in BCA), has been booted out from the computerization project in the graft-ridden Land Registration Authority.

But that is another story.

Heard through the grapevine

EQUITABLE PCIBANK has set its next board meeting on June 29, with Ferdinand Martin Romualdez being invited to the meeting without clear indication yet whether he would also get back his "vice chair" title.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 15, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		FINANCIAL			
		BANKS			
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	32.5	32.5	32	32.5	108,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	47	47.5	46.5	47	1,028,200
China Banking Corp.	855	860	855	860	320
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	100,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	72.5	73	72.5	72.5	359,900
International Exch. Bank	41	41	41	41	37,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30.5	31.5	30.5	30.5	1,011,000
Philippine National Bank	32	32	31	31	4,100
Phil. Savings Bank	38.5	39.5	38.5	39.5	22,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.25	12,000
Security Bank Corp.	48.5	49	46	47	213,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	43	43	43	43	6,300
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS			
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	200,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	215	215	215	215	200
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2060	2060	2050	2050	120
Ivantage Corp.	1.18	1.2	1.16	1.16	2,730,000
		INDUSTRIAL			
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER			
First Gen Corp.	44	44	44	44	1,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43	43	42.5	42.5	139,300
Manila Electric Co. A	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	6,200
Manila Electric Co. B	20.75	21	20.75	20.75	468,500
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7	7	6.9	7	1,475,000
Petron Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.45	3.45	3,938,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	10,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.91	0.92	0.91	0.92	270,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO			
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	13,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23	23	23	47,800
Jollibee Foods Corp.	32	32.5	31.5	32	791,900
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55	24,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63	64	63	64	100,200
San Miguel Corp. B	69.5	71.5	69.5	71.5	91,900
Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	19	18.75	18.75	435,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.215	0.215	0.19	0.19	580,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES			
Southeast Asian Cement	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,510,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.16	1.18	1.14	1.14	1,323,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	62,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	120,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	10,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS			
Global Equities Inc.	0.0675	0.0725	0.0675	0.07	2,400,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
		HOLDING FIRMS			
Ayala Corp.	350	355	347.5	350	179,710
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	415,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	18,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.14	2.2	2.14	2.14	356,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.007	25,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.9	0.94	0.9	0.94	1,060,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	2,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1	1.02	0.99	0.99	9,840,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	288,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.95	3	2.95	3	220,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6	6	5.7	6	669,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	1,400,000
SM Investments Corp.	210	210	208	208	83,230
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.62	0.71	0.62	0.71	360,000
		PROPERTY			
Ayala Land Inc.	11.75	12	11.5	11.5	2,259,600
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	80,000
Belle Corp.	1	1.02	1	1.02	2,650,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	3,050,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	130,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	160,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.58	6,870,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.028	0.03	0.028	0.03	200,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.3	1.32	4,419,000
Interport Res. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	10,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.205	1,200,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.44	1.46	1.4	1.42	19,965,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.205	4,630,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	10,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	4,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	810,000
SM Development Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.48	1.48	160,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.1	7.2	7	7.1	12,994,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.06	0.06	5,700,000
		MEDIA			
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	10,900
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	1,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS			
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.16	1.18	1.14	1.14	1,455,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	880	895	880	880	100,880
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.25	916,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1775	1775	1765	1770	181,620
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY			
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	300,000
Ionics Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.04	2.06	589,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	100,000
Transpacific Broadband	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	100,000
Philweb Corp.	0.029	0.03	0.029	0.03	124,400,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES			
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	13.25	13.25	12.75	13	1,317,800
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.96	0.96	100,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	60,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE			
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.35	4.35	375,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	5,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.52	0.59	130,000
		EDUCATION			
Far Eastern University	1000	1000	1000	1000	250
Ipeople Inc.	3	3	3	3	299,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES			
Macroasia Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	10,000
Paxys Inc.	9.9	10	9.8	9.8	509,000
		MINING			
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	50,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.9	5.9	5.7	5.7	505,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	7,560,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	1,140,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	54,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	51,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	95,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	2.85	2.9	2.8	2.9	7,052,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	2.9	2.95	2.85	2.95	6,451,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27	27	27	27	212,200
Vulcan Ind'l	0.43	0.48	0.43	0.47	1,410,000
		OIL			
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1,500,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	184,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	30,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1	1.12	1	1.1	2,910,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1	1.12	1	1.1	1,220,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	15.25	16	15.25	15.75	521,700
		PREFERRED			
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
		WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.			
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	14.25	14.5	14.25	14.5	16,900

4-month . . .

From page B1

fered rates, increased visibility through product brochures, efficient modes of money transfers such as Internet/online banking, phone banking, bills payment services and increased remittance centers and tie-ups abroad," Tetangco said.

"These bank initiatives offered overseas workers with a wide array of instruments/facilities for faster means of remittance transfer to beneficiaries," Tetangco said.

The major sources of remittances were still the United States, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Japan, Hong Kong, and the United Kingdom.

Bankers said OFWs were becoming wiser, remitting money in installments, or whenever needed by their beneficiaries, instead of sending in bulk to avoid the temptation to splurge on spending.

The BSP is looking at a lower OFW remittances growth of 10 percent this year from the actual growth of 25 percent last year due to certain global risks such as more strict implementation of anti-money laundering measures and immigration policies in First World countries.

The World Bank's Global Development Finance (GDF) 2006 estimated that remittance flows—defined as the sum of workers' remittances, compensation of employees and migrant transfers—exceeded $233 billion worldwide in 2005, of which $167 billion were poured into developing countries. Total flows, including those coursed through informal channels, could be higher by 50 percent based on conservative estimates, the report said.

"Recently, high oil prices have swelled remittance flows from oil-exporting countries. Bahrain, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the Russian Federation have been important sources of remittances to developing countries," the publication said.

The GDF 2006 also said the depreciation of the US dollar, which raised the value of remittances when converted into local currencies, as well as the growth in the number of migrants and their incomes had contributed further to the surge in these remittances.

CURRENCIES

June 15, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.794155	1.000000	53.3190
Japan	Yen	0.006904	0.008693	0.4635
United Kingdom	Pound	1.462754	1.841900	98.2083
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102312	0.128831	6.8691
Switzerland	Franc	0.644606	0.811688	43.2784
Canada	Dollar	0.712375	0.897022	47.8283
Singapore	Dollar	0.498122	0.627235	33.4435
Australia	Dollar	0.587219	0.739426	39.4255
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.107630	2.653928	141.5048
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.211746	0.266631	14.2165
Brunei	Dollar	0.496564	0.625274	33.3390
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000106	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020697	0.026062	1.3896
UAE	Dirham	0.216214	0.272257	14.5165
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.259200	67.1393
Argentina	Peso	0.257842	0.324675	17.3113
Brazil	Real	0.348313	0.438596	23.3855
Denmark	Kroner	0.134145	0.168916	9.0064
India	Rupee	0.017332	0.021825	1.1637
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216391	0.272480	14.5284
Mexico	New Peso	0.069377	0.087359	4.6579
New Zealand	Dollar	0.495696	0.624181	33.2807
South Africa	Rand	0.116190	0.146306	7.8009
Korea	Won	0.000826	0.001040	0.0555
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024416	0.030745	1.6393

Shares recover . . .

From page B1

gains following a sharp downturn earlier this week, dealers said.

They said sentiment got a boost from the rebound on Wall Street Wednesday although last-minute profit-taking trimmed gains.

The composite index finished up 14.80 points at 2,081.80 after trading between 2,067.00 and 2,095.19. Volume was 832.85 million shares worth P1.04 billion. The broader all-shares index gained 3.39 points to 1,325.26.

Gainers led losers 61 to 19, with 40 stocks unchanged.

"What we saw is a mere technical bounce," said Jonathan Ravelas of Banco de Oro.

He said a two-day slide, which sent the main composite index to its lowest level in four months on Wednesday, made some blue chips cheaper.

"It's a good time to do a trading play for now," Ravelas added.

Online brokerage 2TradeAsia.com said the recent selldown was a bit overdone, adding the recent correction in global commodity prices had also helped ease worries over inflation.

Gains in SM Prime Holdings helped lift the main index, with the stock up 20 centavos to P7.10.

Ayala Corp. gained P2.50 to P350 while unit Bank of the Philippine Islands advanced 50 centavos to P47.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. fell P5 to P1,770.

San Miguel A-shares ended unchanged at P64 while its B-shares added a peso to P71.50. *AFP*

Gov't posted budget surplus of ₱5.8B in May

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT POSTED a surprise budget surplus of P5.8 billion in the lean month of May.

The May fiscal position—the first time in 20 years that a surplus was achieved this month when revenues are seasonally low—was due to a combination of higher revenue collection and prudent spending, Finance Secretary Gary Teves said.

The government also posted a budget surplus of P17.6 billion last April.

This narrowed the five-month budget deficit to P44.2 billion against the P67.8 billion shortfall posted in the same period last year. It also reversed the P7.6-billion budget shortfall incurred in the same month last year.

"The positive fiscal performance for many brings us closer to achieving our budget deficit target of not more than P125 billion this year," Teves said.

The development cheered up the local spot foreign exchange market, with the peso rebounding off the year-low of 52.48:$1 hit on Wednesday to close stronger at 53.33 against the US dollar yesterday.

For the month of May, total revenues surged by 31.2 percent to P89.7 billion from P68.4 billion a year ago.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue contributed P61.7 billion, 26 percent higher than the previous year's. The Bureau of Customs likewise posted a 43.8-percent growth in revenues to P17.6 billion from a year ago.

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Located just minutes away from the Santa Rosa exit of the South Superhighway, Ayala Westgrove Heights was deliberately designed to cradle the fresh mountain air, to make even the littlest of breaths a pleasure in itself.

That's why over half of the property (or about 200 hectares) is devoted to parks, gardens, and recreational areas, with the other half reserved for residential development. What it adds up to is one of the least congested residential areas in the country today.
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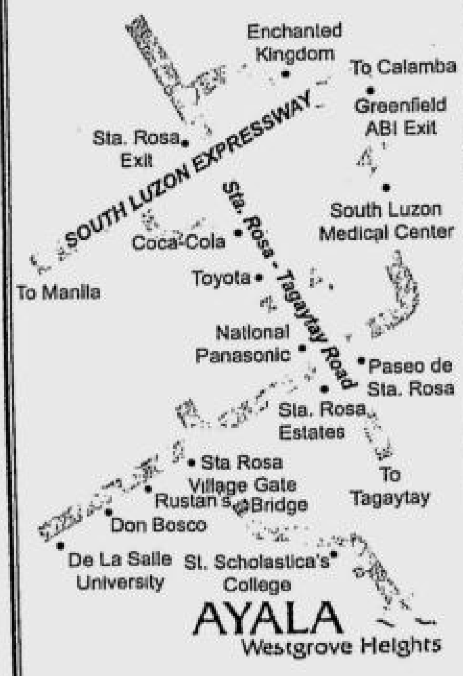

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Highlands Prime eyes projects outside Tagaytay

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

LEISURE HOMES DEveloper Highlands Prime Inc., majority-owned by the SM group, is planning to invest in projects outside Tagaytay, its home base for housing projects, HPI president Antonio Henson said.

Henson said the company has recently identified some pieces of property in the Luzon area—particularly in Metro Manila and the nearby provinces—for this plan but declined to elaborate.

"We are doing some studies now. With our expertise, we are open to projects outside of Tagaytay," Henson said.

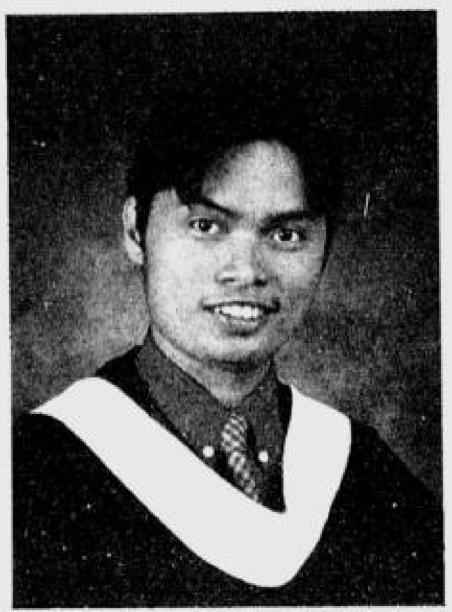
HPI could also take advantage of opportunities under its parent, the SM group, which has a vast landbank all over the country.

Henson earlier said HPI was spending roughly P1.5 billion over the next two years to finish its key projects in Tagaytay.

Expected to be completed this year is The Horizon at Tagaytay Midlands. The project is worth a little over P600 million. It is a 9-hectare low-rise condominium devel-

HIGHLANDS/B13

CONGRATULATIONS



Neil Celeste Rara

—who recently graduated with top honors from The Manila Times School of Journalism—on winning first prize in the Asian Development Bank Key Indicators Cover Design Contest. Rara received his trophy and prize money on June 13, 2006.

We are also proud to announce the second round of examinations for the Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. Scholarship, which leads to a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism. The exam will be held on Saturday, June 17, on the fourth floor, The Manila Times School of Journalism.

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Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week June 13, 2006	Last Week June 06, 2006
Bond Fund - Peso	1.33891	1.37940
Managed Fund - Peso	1.46827	1.52866
Growth Fund - Peso	1.14630	1.23321
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.2199	1.2283

* Note These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

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UNIT PRICES (In Php)	June 12, 2006	June 5, 2006
Fixed Income Fund	1.133333	1.139361
Balanced Fund	1.132415	1.156876
Equity Fund	1.132796	1.200236

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The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

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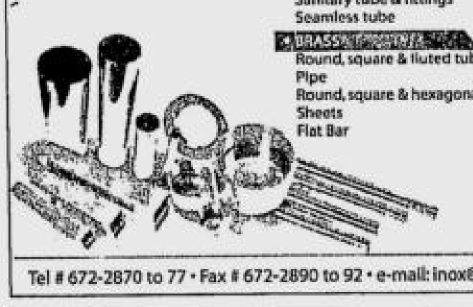

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BUSINESS Friday

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

More than just pampering

'Filipinos can contribute to spa industry by developing therapy industry here'

By Alex Y. Vergara

FORGET FOR THE MEANTIME call centers and the need for English-speaking Filipinos with an American twang. If there's one industry patient and nurturing Filipinos with a modicum of English can really excel in, it's in the estimated $50-billion spa industry.

"Filipinos have the heart, hands, heritage, intelligence and education to become excellent [massage] therapists," said Donald Siegel, managing director of the Turning Point, a Singapore-based events organizing company. "Thais are also good therapists, but Filipinos can be better because most of them speak English."

Singapore-based Siegel recently visited the country to promote the annual Spa Industry Seminar (Sept. 15-17). Now on its third year, the event, which started in Singapore, will be held for the first time in the Philippines at Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort and Spa in Cebu (tel. [032] 231-8276).

Siegel decided to hold the seminar here upon the invitation of Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano, who's working on turning the Philippines into a spa destination. It was a timely invitation since Siegel was in search of seminar venue outside the Lion City.

"It's a global gathering held in a relaxed atmosphere," he said. "We've decided to hold it elsewhere because there's no resort venue big enough in Singapore to accommodate the growing number of participants."

Seminar speakers from the world over will tackle such topics as spa trends, holistic approaches to resort and spa design, sex and sensuality in spas, spa software programs, opportunities and challenges in the horizon, building a spa brand and the role of marketing and PR, among others.

Speakers include big names in the industry such as Susie Ellis, Andrew Gibson, Carroll Dunham, Michael Quinn, Elaine Fenard, Mary-Elizabeth Gifford and Guy Tulloh, among others.

SIEGEL

They'll be joined by Filipinos Cathy Brillantes-Turvill, president of the Spa Professionals International Development Center, and former health secretary Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan.

Brillantes-Turvill will give insights on how to create a service culture within the spa. Galvez Tan will talk on *hilot*, considered as one of the country's traditional healing therapies, and its viability as a mainstream spa treatment. As such, the seminar is aimed more at spa owners and executives.

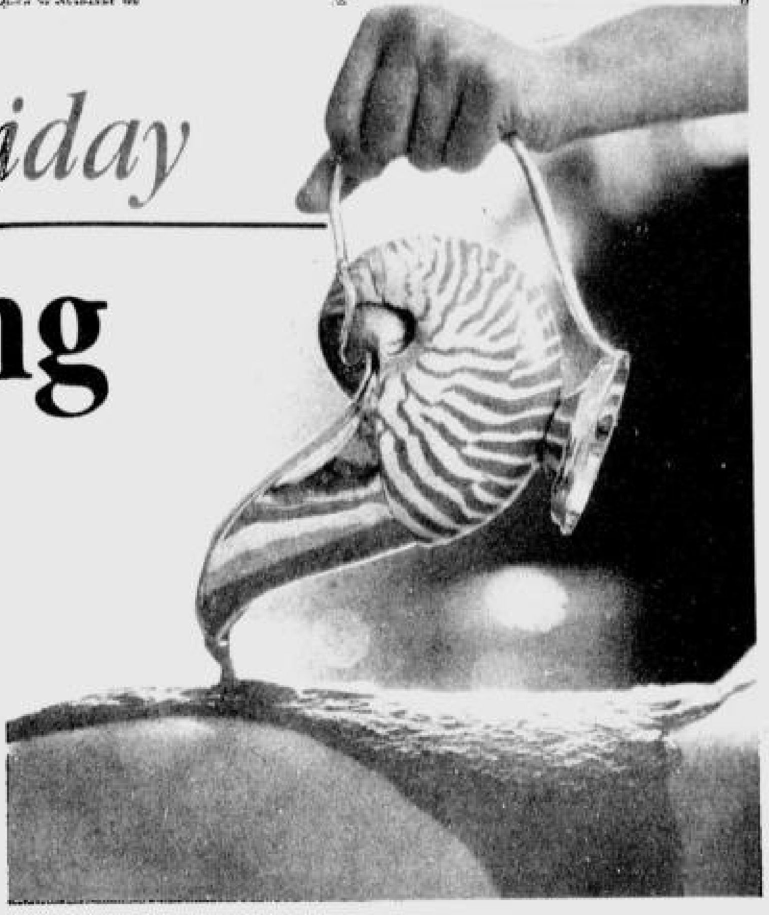
This thrust, however, isn't an attempt to discount the importance and future of massage therapists. Since the spa industry is just one component of the wellness explosion, said Siegel, the potential for Filipinos to excel in such a growing business either here or abroad is great.

"People are living longer," he said. "At the same time, they want to live healthier, more active lives. People are going to spas and buying more health supplements as part of this revolution. They want to have a bigger responsibility for their health partly because they don't trust doctors that much."

And where does the Filipino come in? There's a current dearth of trained therapists even in established spa destinations such as Thailand and Bali because most of them have been deployed elsewhere or are simply swamped by demand, said Siegel. Given the proper training, he believes Filipinos can fill up the slack.

"It's similar to what you've done with nurses," said Siegel. "Filipinos can make a contribution to the industry globally by developing a therapy industry here. Exporting Filipino expertise and skills will in turn make the Philippines a spa destination."

While they're at it, Filipinos can also introduce to the world a new form of massage therapy based on the traditional *hilot* or deep-tissue massage.



THE LANGUAGE of pampering (and healing) is a universal one articulated mostly by the hands.

In fact, through its spa academy, Shangri-La Mactan's Chi Spa is currently training 10 Filipino therapists on a new treatment based on *hilot*.

The group will be the first batch of therapists to be sent to Chi Spa in Muscat. No less than an authentic *manghihilot* provided by the Spa Association of the Philippines is conducting the training based on a universal "template."

"What it also comes down to is marketing," said Siegel, who believes that the world is now ready for more affordable chain spas in the mold of fast food restaurants like McDonald's. "Spas have to differentiate themselves from others by adopting certain traditional techniques as part of their marketing efforts."

It's not just all about pampering, he added. Spas, for instance, are now being integrated into hospitals and are also found in not a few airports, cruise ships, safari lodges and retirement communities.

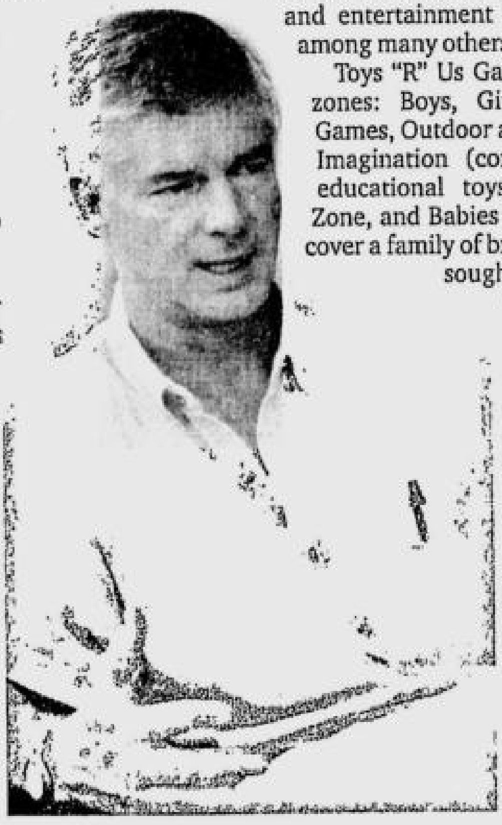
Filipinos these days may not be as proficient as their parents and grandparents were in spoken English. But they're no less caring and responsive to the needs of others. Fortunately, the language of pampering (and healing) is a universal one articulated mostly by the hands.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

RP is promising market for toys

WITH PLAY AS ONE OF THE WAYS WHERE children master new and sometimes complex skills and reasoning abilities, toys help kids interact with objects for their own amusement while working on cognitive and motor skills.

Toys "R" Us, the world's largest specialty toy retailer, recognizes the role toys play in the holistic growth of every child. Thus, for over 40 years, it has been offering its customers the "right products, at the right price, at the right place and at the right time in a pleasurable and convenient shopping environment."



SCHATS

That same vision will soon take shape in Philippines when Toys ' Us opens its first store the 4th level of Robinsc Galleria.

Toys "R" Us began Washington D.C. as garage business founde Charles Lazarus in catering to kids' needs the post-war baby boor As it listened to its customers' needs, it started expanding its merchandise to children's apparel and playthings.

Toys "R" Us is now an $11 billion company with some 1,400 retail stores in more than 30 countries worldwide. In the US alone, there are 680 stores; internationally, Toys "R" Us operates licenses or franchises of about 570 stores.

In Asia, the formidable Li & Fung Retailing became Toys "R" Us International's franchisee and gained 100 percent ownership of Toys "R" Us Asia. Toys "R" Us is the leading toy retailer in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia, while simultaneously providing avenues for entry into new markets including Thailand and China. Li & Fung Retailing and the Robinsons Retail Group forged an alliance to bring the popular toy store chain to the Philippines.

"365 days a year, we make sure we continue to provide our customers the best blend of local and international toys and the unique 'wow!' experience each time they step into a Toys 'R' Us store," says Toys "R" Us Asia CEO Pieter Schats. Thus, in spite of the highs and lows in the economy, Schats believes that with the country's approximately 80 million people with large families and lots of kids (and kids at heart), the Philippines is a promising market for Toys "R" Us.

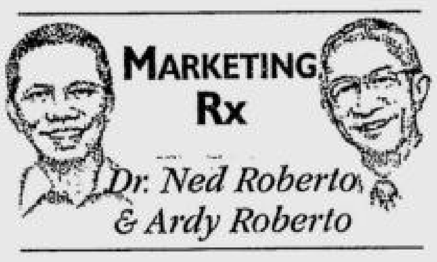
Boasting of a 2,500-sq.m. store space, the Galleria flagship store will be a big "toy box" of surprises and quality toys, plush games, small pools, books, educational and developmental products, games, sporting goods, juvenile furniture, and electronic educational and entertainment kid-friendly software, among many others.

Toys "R" Us Galleria highlights seven zones: Boys, Girls, Family Fun and Games, Outdoor and Sports, Universe of Imagination (comprising science and educational toys), Education, the R Zone, and Babies "R" Us. These sections cover a family of brands such as the most-sought-after toys for boys (action and animé figures, trucks and wheelers), for girls (arts and crafts, role-playing stuff from dress-me-up dolls to mini kitchens) and a broad array of didactic-educational items (from basic plastic or wooden blocks to the latest kiddie technology). It will also incorporate a unique race track concept which will allow shoppers to experience each toy category or zone.

Schats and the whole Toys "R" Us team plan to build a solid market base in Manila and eventually, expand its network across the Philippines. "We plan to open three stand-alone stores within the year and will aggressively convert the toy section of Robinsons Department Store into Toys "R" Us Toyboxes," Coates explains.

"Toys' peak season varies from one country to another. For instance, it's Christmas time in Christian countries, Ramadan in Arab countries and Chinese New Year for the kids in the Orient. I'm quite certain that the Philippines will break all records," Schats enthuses.

Common mistakes firms make in branding and marketing their products?



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

HERE'S OUR GUEST COLUMNIST, best-selling marketing author and brand strategist, Al Ries. He is joined by his daughter, Laura Ries, co-author of The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding and The Origin of Brands. They will both be in Manila next Friday, on the 23rd for the INQUIRER-sponsored Al Ries' Brand Marketing Conference.

Q: You've both worked with numerous brands on the Fortune 500. What lessons can they offer, especially to Asian companies that want to go global?

Ries: The biggest lesson is that big, successful companies don't always follow the laws. And Asian companies that try to emulate them may be doing exactly the wrong things.

To be successful, a small company has to follow the laws. But a big, rich company can ignore many of the laws of marketing and still remain big and successful because of the momentum of the past.

Take Sony, for example. Much of what Sony is doing currently violates many of our laws. As a result, the company is just getting along. What made Sony what it is today is what happened in the past. Sony was the first company to introduce a transistor radio. They followed with a number of other "firsts" that turned the company into the world's most admired electronics company.

We urge marketing people to study the past. Don't look at what companies are doing today, but many companies are doing exactly the wrong things. Look at what made companies successful in the first place.

Q: What are the mistakes most commonly made by companies in the branding and marketing of their products?

Ries: Line extension. Putting the company name on every product. You can't stand for something if you put your name on everything.

Take IBM, for example. It used the IBM name on its line of personal computers which have never made money for the company. In 23 years, IBM reportedly lost $15 billion on their computer line which they eventually sold to Lenovo.

Today, Lenovo is making the same mistake IBM made. Instead of using a separate name for their computer line, they are using the Lenovo name. Line extension strikes again. What they should have done is to focus on laptop computers only and then use the Thinkpad name as a brand name, not a model name.

Q: Tell us the three most brilliant marketing strategies you've witnessed in all these years of working with brands.

Ries: One of the most effective marketing laws is the law of the opposite. If you're not the leader, you should be the opposite of the leader. Mercedes-Benz made big, comfortable cars, so BMW focused on smaller, more nimble "driving" machines. In the process, BMW outsells Mercedes in most countries of the world using their long-time slogan "The ultimate driving machine."

Creative Technology invented the hard-drive MP3 player, but buried their invention under a line-extension name, Creative Nomad Jukebox. Apple Computer took the same concept, gave it a distinctive name (the iPod) and turned the idea into the most successful product of 21 st Century. This case history is a good example of the power of focus. Creative Technology made a wide range of products under the Creative name. Apple used a new name and then focused most of the resources of the company on their new hard-drive MP3 player.

Dietrich Mateschlitz visited Thailand and experienced a drink he had never heard of, called Krating Daeng. He changed the name to Red Bull and built a worldwide brand with current sales of $2.6 billion.

Mateschlitz's key invention is the name of the category "energy drink." People don't buy brands. They buy categories. If you want to launch a new brand that could be a worldwide success, you first have to create a new category. Mateschlitz did it with energy drink. Apple Computer did it with hard-drive MP3 player.

Q: How should Asian companies brand themselves and their products? Could you name two deadly sins to avoid and two golden rules to follow?

Ries: The two deadly sins are:

1. Line extension (putting your company name on everything)
2. Lack of focus (trying to sell too many products to too many different markets.)

The two golden rules are:

1. Be first in a new category
2. Keep your company focused .

These are simple, conceptual ideas, of course, but not easy to execute. Many people think marketing is nothing but common sense, but it's not. Marketing is a highly complex discipline that takes decades to learn.

Q: From your observation, how different are Asians consumers from the rest of the world?

Ries: The interesting thing about travel is realizing how similar people are no matter where you go. Whether it is a town in India or a city in Europe or a small country in Latin America, people are drinking the same things, wearing the same clothes, eating at the same restaurants, talking on the same phones, driving the same cars and watching the same television shows. Every year we are becoming more and more of a truly global society.

Q: You mentioned in one of your articles that marketing and psychology are closely related—calling it the "Halo effect." Is marketing all about psychology then?

Ries: Marketing is psychology in practice. Everything you do in marketing should be done with an eye on the psychology principles involved. The halo effect is just one of these principles.

MarketingRx is hosting Al Ries and his marketing advice column until July. If you have any questions for us or for Al Ries send them to us at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412. God bless!

Only one number to remember to order pizza

PHONE NUMBERS ARE SOMETIMES the easiest to recall but oftentimes, also the easiest to forget. In the competitive food delivery industry, each company battles for recognition and recall.

Research on the learning curve show that more than half the information received can be lost within five minutes. After an hour, two thirds is lost, and almost 90 percent is lost after a day has passed. This has grown so alarming that companies have turned to psychological studies to reverse the pattern.

Studies have proven that the best way to reverse the learning curve is by increasing the recall of information. Which is exactly what Shakey's has done.

Partnering with telecom giant PLDT to give the country its first one-digit delivery number: 7-7-7-7-7, Shakey's has made life easier for its delivery guests—only five numbers to remember, and it's all the same digit! Unlike other delivery numbers, the 77777 number works with mobile telephones, too. Shakey's clients have been requesting for an easier number to remember when ordering by telephone.

Shakey's is the first company in the food industry to come up with the bold delivery order promise with its "if it's late, it's FREE" campaign, which guarantees guests—not just the pizza ordered will be free of charge, but every food product ordered!

The new delivery number can soon be accessed nationwide.

7777

Our NEW DELIVERY HOTLINE

If it's late, it's **FREE**

Foreign retirees and the Filipino farmer

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

LAST MAY 30, RETIREMENT BECAME A PRESIDENTIAL flagship program, with Edgardo Aglipay heading the program as "retirement czar."

Officials believe that, by attracting the targeted 900,000 foreign retirements to the country over the next 10 years, around 4 million jobs will be generated, while government may expect $44 billion to go its coffers.

The program will also reverse the prevailing migration trend, allowing many Filipino health workers to come home or stay put.

But what does this have to do with the Filipino farmer?

Declining pensions

Health Care Coalition president David Paraiso, a senior consultant of the Commission on Aging at the White House in the United States, discovered that the declining pensions of retirees in most developed countries will not be sufficient for them to live comfortably in their home countries. There will therefore be a "tsunami" of retirees leaving the developed countries for less expensive retirement destinations.

Philippine Retirement Incorporated (PRI), the private sector counterpart of the government's Philippine Retirement Authority (PRA), did an analysis of retirees in six selected markets shown below:

Country	2006	2015
Japan	60.4 M	64.2 M
Korea	16.2	21.0
Taiwan	7.6	9.7
USA	112.0	133.6
Europe	163.3	184.1
China	367.4	505.9
TOTAL	**726.9**	**918.5**

The government's minimum target of 900,000 retirees by 2015, represents less than 1/10 of 1 percent (or less than 1 in 1,000) of the number of retirees in the selected markets above.

PRA and PRI

Over the last 20 years, PRA registered only 12,500 retirees, while Malaysia and Thailand each have exceeded that number in only one year. Two reasons have been given for this.

The first is that PRA has not been given the importance and support necessary to fulfill its potential. Now that retirement has become a presidential flagship program, this issue is being addressed.

The second reason is that the private sector retirement industry players have never coordinated on this. PRI, a non-stock non-profit corporation, now unites registered operators of retirement facilities, leisure and resort destinations, condominium and housing developers, hospitals, health insurance, transport and travel services, caregiving training schools, HMOs, financial institutions, tourism advocates, brokers, builders, health and wellness organizations, and other service providers nationwide, under one organization.

In the housing industry, among the key movers behind the PRI formation are the Zobel de Ayalas, Gotianums, Gokongweis, Sys, and Tans.

Other players

When talking of retirement, a "retirement village" comes to mind. This is where an enclave of houses and buildings are constructed with support facilities, such as swimming pools, gymnasiums, walking trails, spas, and other amenities. Taipans and big developers may play a significant role in this.

But according to PRI vice chair Francisco Colayco, the majority of retirees in developed countries live in much less integrated arrangements, such as small buildings and residential houses.

PRA Chair Aglipay relates his own brother's experience in the United States. Though an engineer, Joven Aglipay studied caregiving and started with two retirees in his own home. He now has two more homes with four retirees each.

I saw one such home in Las Vegas. It housed four retirees each paying $3,500, for a monthly total of $14,000, or approximately P750,000. Like all other registered nursing homes, it follows strict standards set by the US government to ensure the quality of service.

For the facilities here to be globally competitive, the PRI, together with PRA, will ensure that these same standards are implemented.

In fact, we expect our retirement offerings to be superior to others because of the Filipino's caring, compassionate, and professional attitude. We are known in almost every part of the world for this, and no other nationality comes close to us.

Examples of this compassion and professionalism are the maid who put herself in front of a speeding car and was killed trying to protect the child under her care in Hong Kong, and the practice of many Middle East executives who entrust their house keys only to their Filipino employees.

The Filipino farmer

Aglipay said that his vision was for a teacher to augment his or her income by

FOREIGN/ B8

Banks' loan portfolio up 1.3% in Apr

Lending activity said to be subdued due to sluggish demand for credit

By Doris C. Dumlao

COMMERCIAL BANK LENDING REBOUNDED in April with a 1.3-percent growth in loan portfolio to P1.56 trillion over a year ago—a turnaround from the 0.5-percent contraction seen in the previous month.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday announced that, on a month-on-month basis, bank lending also grew by 1.3 percent in April—an upturn from the 1.6 percent decline in the previous month.

"Overall commercial bank lending activity remains subdued given the sluggish demand for credit by firms and the continued cautious lending stance of banks, aimed at reducing their nonperforming assets," Tetangco said.

TETANGCO

"Nevertheless, commercial bank lending is expected to continue to rise at a gradual pace as banks continue to see improvements in asset quality."

Loan growth in April came from the following sectors: financial institutions, real estate and business services (14 percent); agriculture, fisheries and forestry (8 percent); community, social and personal services sector (3.3 percent); mining and quarrying (2.8 percent); and electricity, gas and water (0.4 percent).

These had offset the declines in outstanding loans in the following sectors: construction (-33.2 percent); wholesale and retail trade (-12.2 percent); transportation, storage, and communication (-9.3 percent); and manufacturing (-2.3 percent).

Arthur Ty, president of the country's biggest bank, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., said that the banks in general are still reeling from the soured loans that had piled up since the Asian currency crisis.

Ty said the sluggish bank lending was not all due to lack of interest to lend, but because of higher standards adopted in scrutinizing borrowers.

He added that there was not much demand for loans for expansion.

In general, he said there was still lackluster borrowing appetite from the corporate and middle market segments.

But given the shrinking interest rate margins, Ty believes that "that will force some banks to lend."

Also, Tetangco said the BSP remained focused on helping to clean up banks' balance sheets as well as addressing weaknesses in managing risks and on ensuring that supervision standards were in line with international standards.

"These efforts should help ensure that financial intermediation activity remains supportive of the economy's growth objectives," Tetangco said.

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Fed's dilemma: Prices climb as growth slows

In US, high energy cost pushed up prices in manufacturing, retail in Q2

IN THE UNITED STATES, ECONOMIC GROWTH in the last month and a half was generally strong, even though there were "some signs of deceleration," the Federal Reserve said in a report on Wednesday.

But prices in most regions rose, according to the report, known as the Beige Book.

With a decision on setting interest rates two weeks away, the report underscores the two issues competing for the Fed's attention: rising inflation and softening economic growth.

Remarks in recent weeks by Fed chairman Ben S. Bernanke and other officials have made clear that their primary concern is fighting inflation.

That point was reaffirmed Wednesday when the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Richard W. Fisher, called current inflationary pressures corrosive and discomforting.

Susan Schmidt Bies, a Fed governor, made similar remarks on Wednesday.

In its Beige Book report, which it releases eight times a year, the Fed said high energy costs had pushed up prices in manufacturing and, to a lesser extent, retail from mid-April to early June.

Reports of those costs being passed along to the consumer varied, but were more prevalent now than earlier in the year.

"I think the Beige Book was a pretty faithful mirror on what we pretty much already know, which is that economy is slowing a bit, but it's not nearly enough to stop the pressures of inflation," said Ethan Harris, chief US economist for Lehman Brothers. "It's a milder version of stagflation."

The report said consumer spending continued to increase, but showed signs of moderating. It said gas prices had put pressure on spending but noted that "rising interest rates were a concern" in some districts.

The report painted a mixed picture of how far inflation was spreading down the supply chain.

It noted that manufacturers had seen higher prices for concrete, steel, copper and natural gas, causing them to increase their own prices.

"Few reports indicated that these increases were reaching the retail level."

Still, the report said, retailers had been able to raise prices in the Boston, Dallas and Philadelphia areas.

In many parts of the country, the Fed said, employers reported that they were facing a shortage of skilled workers.

Truck drivers, engineers, oil and gas workers and financial analysts were all difficult to find.

The report also noted that existing home sales and construction had slowed.

New York Times News Service

MRL earmarks ₱634M for gold, copper explorations in RP

By Christine A. Gaylican

MINING FIRM MRL GOLD PHILIPPINES INC. will set aside P634 million in capital expenditure for its mining exploration projects in the country over the next two years, a ranking company official said.

According to MRL Gold Philippines president J. A. Climie, the company hopes to advance the exploration of 10 mining prospects in the country—the Archangel, Lobo and Calo copper-gold exploration projects in Batangas; the Pan de Azucar copper-gold exploration project on Pan de Azucar Island and Panay Island; the Agata, Tapian San Francisco, Tapian Main and Mat-I copper-gold exploration projects in Surigao del Sur and in Agusan del Sur in Mindanao.

MRL is the Philippine operating company of Mindoro Resources Ltd., a firm listed in the TSX Venture Exchange in Canada. The local subsidiary mainly is into gold and copper exploration.

"There have been good prospects with our exploration in what we call the Kay Tanda Drilling in Batangas," Climie told the INQUIRER in an interview. "We found encouraging gold mineralization in the area, including a bonanza-grade vein."

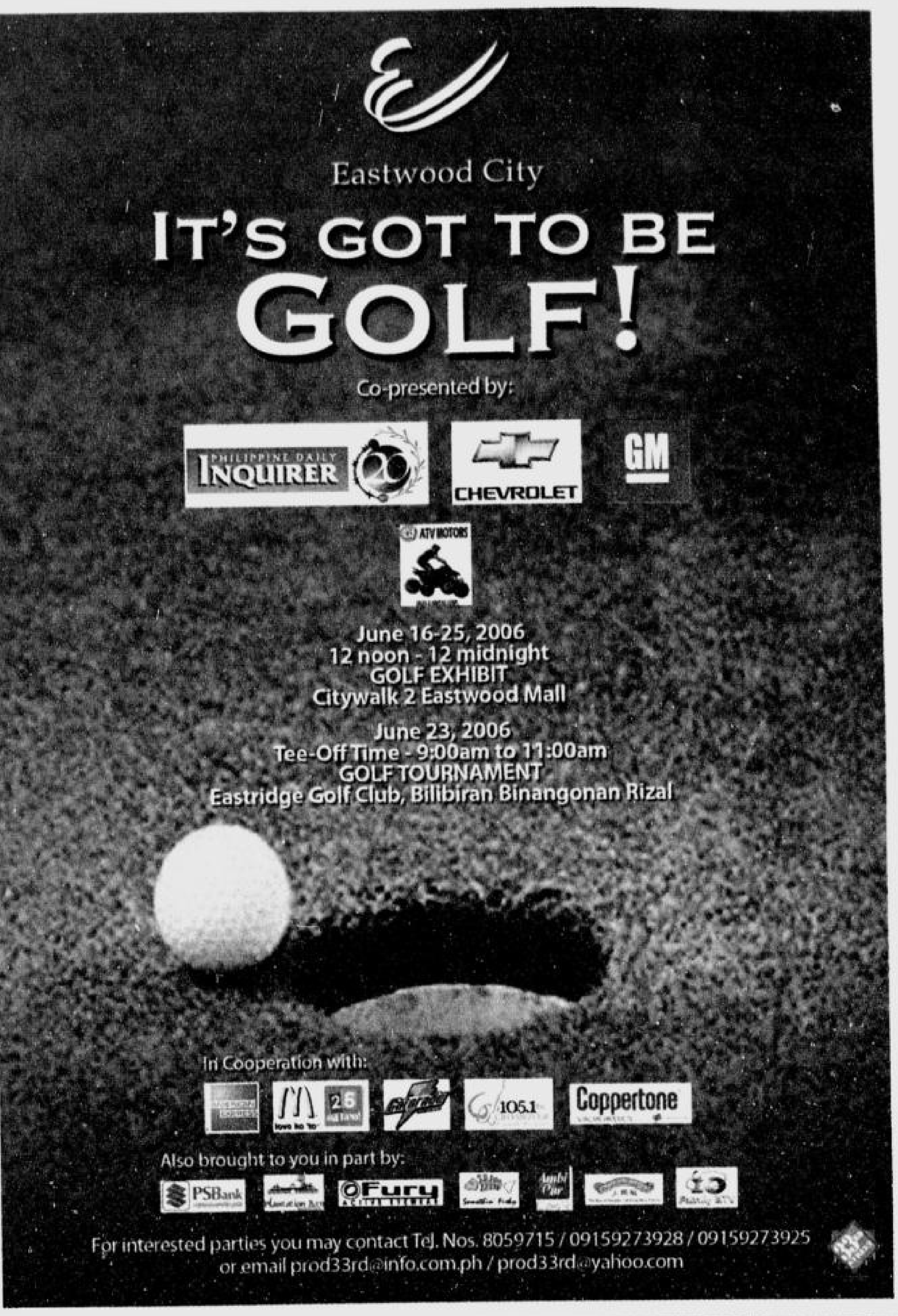
In the first quarter, Climie said that the company also made a significant find, uncovering a porphyry copper-gold prospect, called the Calantas, in its 24,000-hectare exploration area in Batangas.

"The Calantas prospect is quite near Phelps Dodge Inc.'s Taysan drilling site, where there are large clusters of porphyry copper-gold deposits," he said. "It is a potential drilling site."

The mining company recently forged a joint venture with listed Australian mining company Medusa Mining Ltd.'s local subsidiary Philsaga Mining Corp. to undertake the projects.

In the agreement, Medusa Mining will sink in no less than $300,000 over the next three years for MRL Gold's projects in the country.

But Medusa will also have a 70-percent take in the first 500 tons of ore produced from its narrow vein deposits and in its related porphyry copper-gold deposits.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Foreign ...

From page B7

taking care of one or two foreign retirees in his or her home. The retirees will likewise benefit, not only from lower costs, but also from the compassionate care they would receive from their Filipino hosts—something the retirees might not get in their home countries.

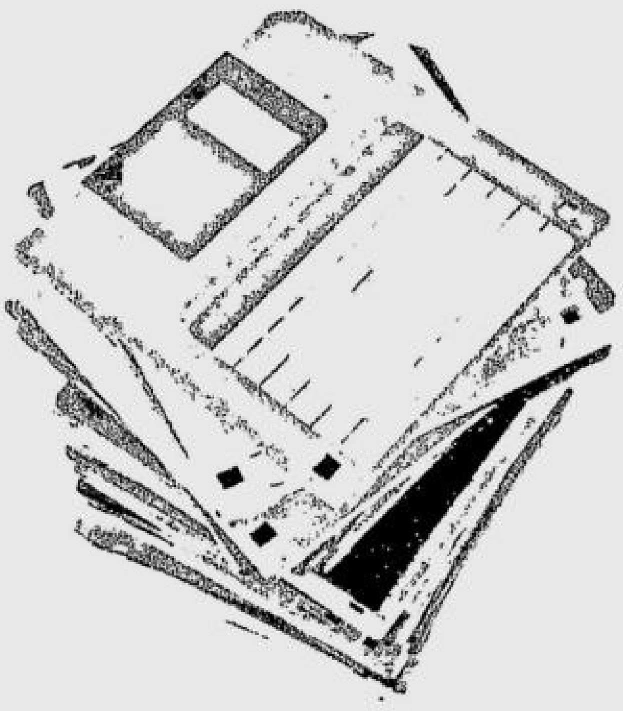
For a successful retirement industry, two areas that require strict global compliance are health care services and the diet. It is in the diet area where farmers play an important role. They can provide the high quality food needed by the retirees.

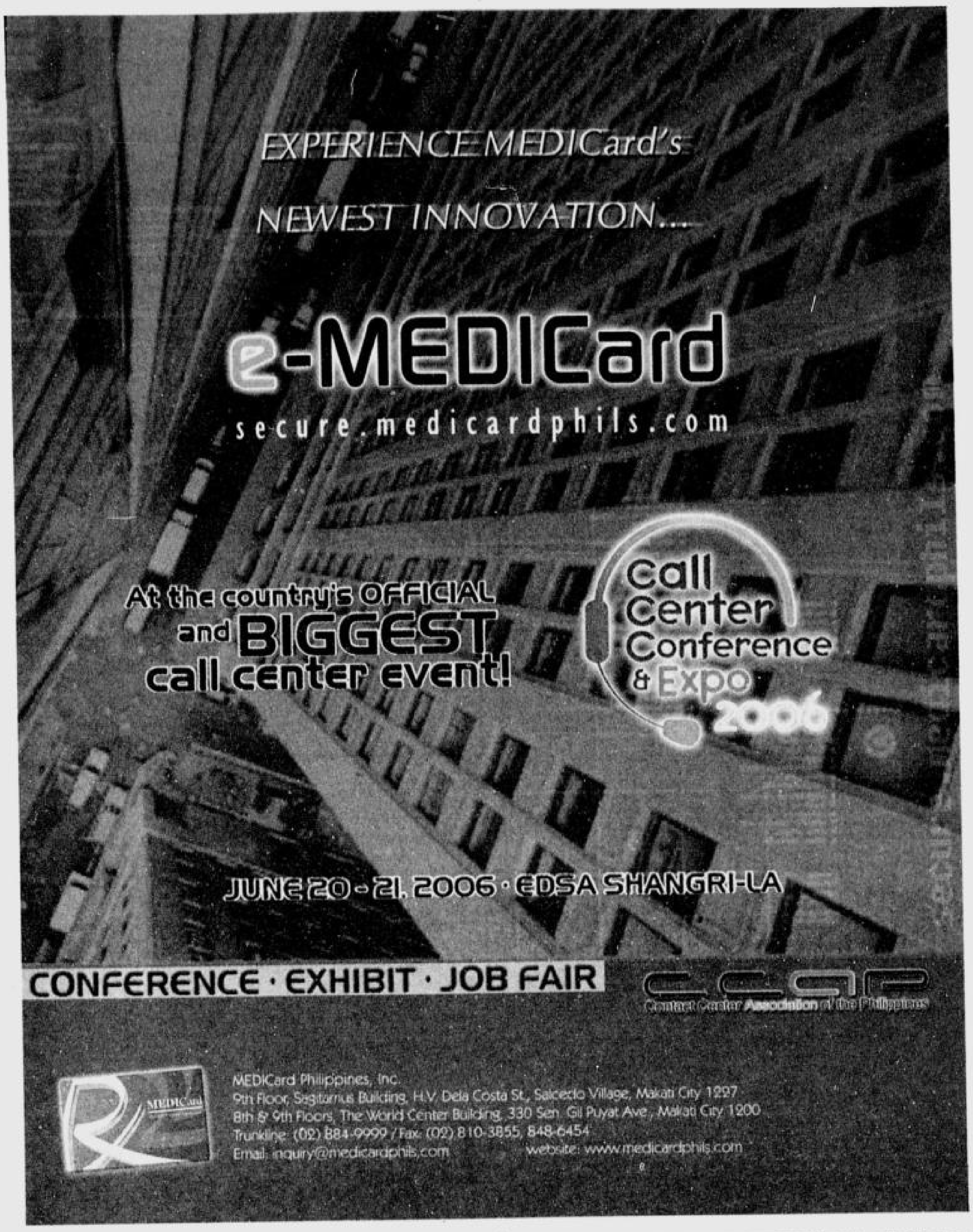
In addition, model farmers can likewise house retirees. There are many retiree farmers in developed countries looking for retirement destinations. These farmers prefer a farming environment. They can also live more productive and fulfilling lives by sharing their agricultural technology and expertise with Filipino farmers.

The Alyansa Agrikultura has already recommended the creation of a special window to attract foreign farmer retirees.

This and other opportunities will be discussed in a PRI-PRA Retirement Industry and Investment Summit to be held on July 3 at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel. For more information, please call Ethel Ruffa at 848-1412 to 16 (local 119).

(The author is Agriwatch chair; former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary for agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatch-phil@yahoo.com or telefax 8522112)





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Benpres, MPC talks may not push through

Negotiations to acquire stake in MNTC drag on, MVP says

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PLANS OF METRO PACIFIC Corp. to acquire the 49-percent stake held by Benpres Holdings Corp. in a toll road operator may not push through as the local arm of the Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd. has started looking at other opportunities in power generation and toll road construction.

MPC chair Manuel V. Pangilinan said in a briefing yesterday that negotiations with the Lopez Group for a substantial stake in the Manila North Tollways Corp., the operator of the 80-kilometer North Luzon Expressway, have dragged on for more than a year and "have not made any significant progress."

"We would be patient, but we can't wait forever. We have the option to look at other opportunities because these discussions have been going on for a year. It would be more prudent for Metro to look at other opportunities," Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan stressed, however, that MPC was not turning its back on negotiations with the Lopezes, but said that MPC would consider other offers on the table.

An agreement with the Lopezes—who own Benpres and First Holdings Corp., both shareholders of the toll road operator—may lead to another deal with MNTC's foreign shareholders, French firm Egis and Australian firm Leighton Asia who were looking to sell their combined 23 percent to MPC.

Benpres owns 49 percent of First Philippine Infrastructure Development Corp. (FPIDC), which in turn owns 67 percent of MNTC.

The remaining 51 percent in FPIDC is owned by Benpres' sister firm First Philippine Holdings Corp.

Pangilinan also said earlier that MPC wanted to increase its investment in Skyway, Metro Manila's overhead highway to the south, but an Indonesian group that controlled the Skyway could not decide if it wanted to retain control or sell.

Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp., a joint venture between Indonesian firm P.T. Citra Lamtoro Gung Persada and PNCC, controls the Skyway.

MPC has a 10-percent stake in the company and has offered to take control from the Indonesians.

The 9.3-kilometer Skyway runs from the Magallanes subdivision in Makati City to Alabang, and can be extended by another six to seven kilometers to Bicutan.

Pangilinan had said that before MPC could offer to extend the Skyway from Bicutan to Alabang town in Metro Manila, South Luzon Expressway has to be developed first all the way to Calamba town, outside Metro Manila.

MPC shareholders yesterday approved the company plan to make investments within and outside of the property sector.

Life is complicated enough.
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WESM goes operational ahead of time

By Abigail L. Ho

THE WHOLESALE ELECTRICITY SPOT MARKET (WESM) will begin full operations on June 23, ahead of the July 6 schedule, following the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of the electricity bourse's regulatory filings.

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself announced the early start of WESM's operation during yesterday's turnover ceremony for the Philippine National Oil Co. Energy Development Corp.'s Upper Mahiao geothermal plant.

"The ERC chairman informed us that they have approved all of the requirements necessary for the commercial operation of the WESM, which include the price determination methodology, the administered price and the market fees," Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla told reporters yesterday. "The President indicated that since we are now ready, then we should go for June 23. We need not wait for a later date."

Lotilla said the operation of the WESM would not only pave the way for a more transparent mechanism for buying and selling power, but would also enable the determination of the market price—the basis for determining the universal charge for stranded costs.

This, he said, would allow the refinancing of such costs over a longer period of time, effectively resulting in lower costs for consumers.

In a related development, the ERC, Department of Energy and WESM operator Philippine Electricity Market Corp. have established a tripartite committee that would institute "mitigation measures" for WESM.

Lotilla said the committee's main goal was to adopt an initial bid cap or price offer ceiling at the electricity bourse to limit possible instances of excessive increases in market prices.

"This tripartite committee will address market price contingencies that may arise during the initial operations of the WESM, when institutional mechanisms to address these contingencies are still untested," he said.

"These contingencies, though remote, may include excessive increases in market prices. The committee is, therefore, expected to apply preemptive measures as needed during the early stages of the WESM."

Ultimately, he said the tripartite committee was formed to safeguard consumers against extreme price volatilities, which could occur during the first few months of the WESM's operations.

"While we do not expect extreme pricing volatility in the first year of market operations, it is prudent to be cautious," PEMC president Lasse Holopainen said.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Davao City Water District (DCWD), through its Bids and Awards Committee-B (BAC-B), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract	: Exploratory Well Drilling of Riverside Production Well No. 2
Location	: Los Amigos, Tugbok District, Davao City
Brief Description	: 250mmØ borehole for 500m depth exploratory well drilling, 200m depth well utilization with gravel pack and 18m depth cement grout with 1m clay seal for sanitary seals. 650mmØ upper borehole with 450mmØ x 66 lm. Blank casing, 450mmØ lower borehole with 250mmØ stainless screen/blank casing combination. Rotary Drilling Method.
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	: Php 4,859,954.82
Contract Duration	: 149 Calendar Days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC-B will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation-A (IRR-A).

The schedule of BAC-B activities is as follows:

BAC-B Activities	Schedule
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	June 16-30, 2006
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	June 16-30, 2006
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	June 17-July 7, 2006
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	July 10-28, 2006
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 17-August 04, 2006
6. Pre-Bid Conference	August 9, 2006; 2:00 p.m.
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	August 23, 2006; 2:30 p.m.

The BAC-B will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms thru the BAC-B Secretariat c/o at the DCWD Office of the Asst. General Manager for Operations, Bajada, Davao City, upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of **Php 1,500.00** to the DCWD Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC-B at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC-B to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **Php 2,500.00** to the DCWD Cashier.

The Davao City Water District assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **WILLIAM V. GUILLEN**
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(PDI–June 16 & 23, 2006)

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3. Approved Budget of Contract (ABC) : P419,793.00

Scope of Work:

1. Installation of 3-75kVA distribution transformer and its accessories.
2. Tapping/ testing and energization

Supply, Delivery, Installation/tapping and energization of the transformers shall be completed within 30 days from issuance or receipt of Notice to Proceed.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be obtained by Interested Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee, in cash, in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P 2,500.00).

Interested Bidders may obtain further information and inspect the Bidding documents at the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), Secretariat, NFA Regional Office Pawing Palo, Leyte, Tel. No. 053-323-3084 / Fax # 053-323-3061 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Bidding Schedule is as follows:	Date	Venue
Issuance of Bid Documents	June 13-23, 2006 (8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)	NFA RO8 Pawing, Palo, Leyte
Pre-bidding conference	June 26, 2006, (9:30 a.m.)	NFA Conf. Rm. Pawing Palo, Leyte
Submission & Opening of Bids	July 7, 2006 (9:30 a.m.)	-do-

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in an amount at least equal to, and not lower than a percentage of the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid, in the following schedule and form or any combination thereof:

Cash or Cashier's Check or Manager's Check — 1% or
Surety Bond issued by GSIS marked "Callable on Demand" — 2.5%

The NFA reserves the right to accept and reject any or all bids, waive any minor defect therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

The NFA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders, for any expense incurred in the preparation of bid documents.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO J. ADORABLE**
Assistant Regional Manager
Chairman, NFA-RBAC

(PDI – June 10 & 16, 2006)

Republika ng Pilipinas
Republic of the Philippines
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
Room 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City
Telefax 636-65-42
Direct Line 636-65-43
Trunk Line 632-13-61 local 2115
Website http://www.deped.gov.ph

DepED

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(Re-Bid)

The DepED-Bids and Awards Committee (DepED-BAC) invites eligible bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for Supply and Delivery of the following:

Package	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Pre-Bid Conference	Bid Submission deadline/ Opening of Bids	Price of Bidding Documents (non-refundable)	Venue	End user
Development and Mass Production of Video Lessons and User's Guide in Second Year Mathematics (Intermediate Algebra) in Compact Discs	Php2,100,000.00	June 22, 2006, 10:00 A.M.	July 6, 2006, 10:00 A.M.	Php1,000.00	Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal I Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City	Bureau of Secondary Education (BSE)

Bids received that exceed the ABC per package shall be rejected.

The Bidding Documents in Compact Disc (CD) or hard copy shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Procurement Service, Room 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, starting **June 15 up to Opening of Bids** upon payment in cash of non-refundable fee indicated above.

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at http://www.deped.gov.ph or www.procurementservice.org or call DepED-PS at telephone no. 636-65-43 or fax no. 636-65-42.

DepED-BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, or declare failure of bidding at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) Atty. **CAMILO MIGUEL M. MONTESA**
Assistant Secretary and BAC Chairman

(PDI–June 16 & 23, 2006)

20% DISCOUNT!
ENGINE TUNE-UP
WHEEL ALIGN,
BALANCING BRAKES,
CAMBER CONVERSION
CREDIT CARDS HONORED
RUBBERVOLT
77 VIS Ave., QC
36 West Ave 9201794/95

More Classified Ads: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Invitation to Bid on page B13.

Standard Form Number 05
Revised on July 28, 2004
[illegible]

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
Provincial Capitol Malaybalay City
Tel. #088-221-4820 & Telefax #088-221-4820
E-mail Add: buk_provl_bac@yahoo.com.ph
OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR
Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF BUKIDNON**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

NAME OF THE PROJECT	: **Project I – Drugs and Medicines** **Project II – Medical, Laboratory Supplies and Reagents**
LOCATION	: **Provincial General Services Office**
BRIEF DESCRIPTION	: For the use of Seven (7) Provincial Hospitals and Twenty Two (22) Health Stations for the second semester of CY 2006.
Approved Budget for the Contract	: **P18,841,403.82** **P6,947,505.46**
DELIVERY PERIOD	: 15 working days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed.
PLACE OF DELIVERY	: Provincial General Services Office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	June 19, 2006
2. Application for Eligibility	June 23, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.
3. Pre-bid conference	June 20, 2006
4. Opening of Bids Deadline for the submission of Bid documents	July 04, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. July 04, 2006 not later than 9:00 a.m.
5. Bid Evaluation	July 7, 2006
6. Post-qualification	July 14, 2006
7. Notice of Award	July 18, 2006

Bid Documents will be available only to Prospective Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,000.00 for Project I and P1,000.00 for Project II at the **Provincial Treasurer's Office.**

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the BAC office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City. All Bids must be accompanied by Bid Security equal to 1% for Cash, Certified check, Cashier's check, Manager's check, Bank draft or Irrevocable letter of credit; 1.5% for Bank guarantee; 2.5% for Surety bond of the **Approved Budget for the Contract as advertised**. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

The **Province of Bukidnon** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES**
Prov'l. Admin/BAC Chairman

(PDI–June 16 & 23, 2006)

Standard Form Number : SF-GOOD-05
Revised on : July 28, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The LGU-Kalilangan, Bukidnon, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project.

Name of project	: *Rehab / Improvement of Macatol-Panicupon FMR*
Location	*LGU, Kalilangan, Bukidnon*
Brief Description	*Purchase of construction materials, equipment rental, warehouse and labor*
Approved Budget for the Contract	*Php 5,742,778.88*
Contract Duration	
Delivery Period	*Immediate delivery (maximum of 15 working days) of contract*

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass-fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES		SCHEDULE
1	Issuance of Bid Documents	June 9-22, 2006
2	Pre-bid Conference	June 14, 2006
3	Opening of Bids	June 26, 9:00 AM
4	Bid Evaluation	June 26, 9:00 AM
5	Post-qualification	July 3, 2006
6	Notice of Award	July 18, 2006

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non refundable amount of Php ________ to the Municipal Treasurer of LGU-Kalilangan, Bukidnon.

The LGU-Kalilangan, Bukidnon assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved :

(Sgd.) **SATURNINO M. TORRES**
MCR/BAC Chairman

(PDI – June 9 & 16, 2006)

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
Industry & Investment Building
385 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City, Philippines
Tel (632) 897-6682 Fax Nos. (632) 895-3521 (IPG)
(632) 895-3981 (IG) (632) 895-3978 (TSG) (632) 890-3051 (AD)
E-mail OSAC@boi.gov.ph Homepage http://www.boi.gov.ph
Cable address INVESTBOARD P.O. Box 1872 Makati

dti

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **HSBC ELECTRONIC DATA PROCESSING (PHILIPPINES) INC.** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New IT Export Service Firm in the field of Operation of a Call Center on a Pioneer Status** with project/plant site located at **5150 North Bridgeway, Northgate Cyberzone, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.**

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

RUDY B. CAÑA
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI–June 16, 2006)

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144
722-1155

OBITUARIES

"I am resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Me, even if he dies; will live and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die." – **John 11:25-26**

In Loving Memory
on the
2nd Death Anniversary of our Beloved

ROSALINDA TIANGCO-ALINDOGAN

(August 29, 1933 – June 16, 2004)

Holy Masses will be offered today, June 16, 2006 at the following churches:

St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish .... 6:15 AM
Magallanes Village, Makati City 7:00 AM
12:15 NN
6:00 PM

Santuario de San Antonio .... 6:15 AM
McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City 7:30 AM
12:15 NN
6:00 PM

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish .... 6:30 AM
4098 Bougainville Rd., Sun Valley Subd., Parañaque 8:00 PM

Basilica Del Sto. Niño .... 8:00 AM
Augustinian Friars 10:00 AM
Osmeña Blvd., Cebu City 6:30 PM
7:30 PM

Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church .... 8:00 AM
7669 Girard Ave, La Jolla, California 92037

Sto. Niño de Paz Community .... 6:15 AM
Greenbelt Chapel, Ayala Center, Makati City 7:15 AM
12:15 PM
5:45 PM

St. Thomas More Catholic Church....... 9:00 AM
6511 176th St. SW Lynnwood, WA 98037

Please remember her in your prayers.

CAPT EDMUNDO FUENTEBELLA JR

A MEMBER OF PHIL. MARINE CORPS

The only son of the late
EDMUNDO (NONO) FUENTEBELLA SR.
and **VICENTA D. FUENTEBELLA**

Died in line of duty last June 06, 2006
in Papahatan, Sapa Sapa, Tawi-Tawi. (Land Mine)

He is survived by his wife **Joseline Fuentebella**; sons **Carl Anthony/Angelo & Christina Yvonne**; sisters **Rita Mae & Pamela**; nephews and nieces and all his relatives and classmates request for pious readers to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in Mortuary Chapel at Philippine Marines, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig.

Holy Mass will be held on Saturday, June 17, 2006, 8:00 a.m. at the Holy Child Church, Philippine Marines, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City. Interment follow at Libingan ng mga Bayani.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

Name of Project	TECHNICAL EDUCATION & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
Brief Description of WORKS	ELECTRICAL REHABILITATION OF NITVET/OTI FACILITIES
ADB Loan Number	1750-PHI
OPEC Loan Number	8192-PHI

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) co-financed with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Fund for International Development towards the cost of the Technical Education and Skills Development Project (TESDP), and it intends to apply part or the whole of the proceeds of this credit, together with the GOP counterpart funds, for payments under the contract for **Electrical Rehabilitation of NITVET/OTI Facilities.**
2. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for Electrical Rehabilitation of NITVET/OTI Facilities. Completion of Works is required not later than one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from Contractor's Receipt of the Notice to Proceed (NTP).
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", to the extent it is consistent with Asian Development Bank's procurement procedures and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries as defined in *"Guidelines for Procurement Under Asian Development Bank Loans"*.
4. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
5. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from The Secretariat, Bids and Awards Committee of TESDA Central Office and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours (8:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday - Friday) starting June 19, 2006.
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Php 2,000.00 or its equivalent in US Dollars. The method of payment will be in cash or check payable to TESDA, said payment to be acknowledged through an official government receipt (O.R.). The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the Bidder or his authorized representative on or before June 19, 2006.
7. The TESDA Bids and Awards Committee will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all eligible Bidders on July 03, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. at the address given elow.
8. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before August 02, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of cash, cashier or certified check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit and in the amount equivalent to 1% of the total bid price and Bank Guarantee in the amount equivalent to 1.5% of the total bid price payable to TESDA or an equivalent amount in freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid Opening shall be on August 02, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. at the address given below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who chose to attend.
9. Completion of Works is required not later than one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from Contractor's receipt of the NTP.
10. TESDA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
SANTIAGO M. YABUT JR.
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
(Deputy Director General, Field Operations)
TESDA Complex, TESDA Administration Building
East Service Road, South Luzon Expressway
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City

Tel. No. : 817-40-76 to 80 and 888-5798
Fax No. : 817-90-40
E-mail : psd_ocsa@tesda.gov.ph
Website: www.tesda.gov.ph

(Sgd.) SANTIAGO M. YABUT, JR.
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--June 16 & 23, 2006)

Trans Co

Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation
South Luzon Operations and Maintenance

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Construction of Lineman's /Operator's Villa at Batangas Substation

[TRANS-06-CLVBS-EG-04-PB2]

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM***, through the *Internal Cash Generation (ICG)* intends to apply the sum of *Three Million Fcur Hundred Eighty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Forty Five & 82/100 (Php3,487,445.82)* being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *Construction of Lineman's/Operator's Villa at Batangas Substation*. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** now invites potential Bidders to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) and apply for eligibility for *the construction of lineman's/operator's villa at batangas substation*. Bidders should possess a valid ***PCAB license*** with ***License Particular of at least: "Category D & C, General Building"*** and ***Registration Particular of at least: "Small B-Building & Industrial Plant***, must have at least completed a single contract similar to the contract to be bid involving experience in construction of all types of building, i.e. housing, schools, hospitals, market, multi-storey buildings, airport terminals & other related structures. The value of which should be at least 50% of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for submission of eligibility documents shall be on the same date of the opening of Eligibility documents: ***July 07, 2006, 1:30 P.M.*** at the address mentioned in the next succeeding paragraphs. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Document. Completion of the works is required by ***125 calendar days.***

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR Part A of R.A 9184, only bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.

Interested Bidders shall secure the Eligibility documents from the BAC Secretariat at the address stated below, starting ***June 16-July 04, 2006 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.*** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Php1,000.00.*** They shall submit their accomplished Eligibility documents on or before ***July 07, 2006, 1:30 P.M.*** at the stated address. Eligibility Screening shall be held on ***July 07, 2006, 1:30 P. M.*** at the OAVP Conference Room B of the stated address.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM** Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from ***8:00 A.M.*** to ***5:00 P.M.*** on ***July 28-31, 2006.***

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee ***Php2,000.00***. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative starting ***July 28-31, 2006, 8:00 A.M.- 5:00 P.M.***

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on ***Aug. 03, 2006, 9:30 A.M.*** at the OAVP Conference Room Transco, SLOM San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna.

Deadline for submission of bids is on ***August 17, 2006, 9:30 A. M.*** at the address below.. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the prescribed form indicated under Section 27.2 of R. A. 9184. Bid opening shall be on the same date, ***August 17, 2006, 9:30 A.M.*** at the ***OAVP Conference Room B of Transco SLOM.*** Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation – South Luzon Operations & Maintenance
Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)
San Vicente Biñan, Laguna 4024
Mr. Ruben G. Castuera – BAC Chairman
(02) 981-4576 to78 local 4094; 4086; 4053
rgcastuera@transco.ph
(02) 981-4576 to 78 local 4007
www.transco.ph.

(SGD.) RUBEN G. CASTUERA
BAC Chairman

(PDI--June 16 & 24, 2006)

TransCo

National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF REINFORCED THERMOPLASTIC MEMBRANE WATERPROOFING FOR PMC BUILDING OF SYSTEM OPERATIONS AND THREE (3) REPEATER STATIONS

Reference No.: PB060519-RM0087
PR. No.: SCD-05-010055 & ITASD-06-018654

1. The *NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, Head Office Region* (TRANSCO-HO) through the *2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board*, intends to apply the sum of *Php 3,404,288.00* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF LABOR AND MATERIALS FOR THE WATERPROOFING OF PMC BUILDING OF SYSTEM OPERATIONS AND THREE (3) REPEATER STATIONS** *Reference No.:* PB060519-RM0087/PR No.: SCD-05-010055 & ITASD-06-018654. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the **SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF REINFORCED THERMOPLASTIC MEMBRANE WATERPROOFING FOR PMC BUILDING OF SYSTEM OPERATIONS AND THREE (3) REPEATER STATIONS**. Delivery of the GOODS is required *in sixty (60) days*. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below from ***June 16, 2006 to July 12, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.*** and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of *Php 1,000.00*. The method of payment will be *Cash*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. Site Inspection is required prior to the Pre-Bid conference, for details please contact Mr. Arsenio R. Quevedo at Telephone No. 981-4454.
6. The *TRANSCO-HO* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***June 28, 2006/10:00 a.m.*** at *the Admin Conference Room.*
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***July 13, 2006/10:00 a.m.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted:

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1% of ABC)	Schedule I: PhP 25,000.00 Schedule II: PhP 9,042.88
2. Bank guarantee (1.5% of ABC)	Schedule I: PhP 37,500.00 Schedule II: PhP 13,564.32
3. Surety Bond (2.5% of ABC)	Schedule I: PhP 62,500.00 Schedule II: PhP 22,607.20
4. Foreign government guarantee (100% of ABC)	Schedule I: PhP 2,500,000.00 Schedule II: PhP 904,288.00

NOTE: *(The sum of Schedules I & II is the amount of Bid Security for bidders who wish to bid for both Schedules)*

8. Bid opening shall be on ***July 13, 2006/10:00 a.m.*** at the ***Admin Conference Room same address below***. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center Complex, BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No.: (632) 981-2206 / Fax No. (632) 922-8432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – June 16 & 22, 2006)

San Sebastian slates dinner-for-a-cause

THE SAN SEBASTIAN COLLEGE'S STUDENT Catholic Action and the Lakas Kasama Ka Supreme Student Government Class '96-'97 and '97-98', in cooperation with the Sebastinian Theater Arts Guild, Sebastinian Arts Society, The Parliament and the SSC-R Alumni Inc., will hold a Dinner-For-A Cause on June 17 at the Jade Valley Restaurant in Timog Avenue, Quezon City.

Dubbed as "Poging Baste", the event will raise funds to the organization's apostolates, outreach and scholarship programs. The ticket price is P500.00.

For more inquiries, please send your text message to Mr. Edward Dantis at 0926-3326275 or e-mail at pogibaste@yahoo.com.ph.

'Generation Rx'

VISIVO PRODUCTIONS INC, THE PRODUCER of Animal-X, 2DMAXXX, and Pilipinas Sabong Sports will embark on a new project... "Generation Rx".

"Generation Rx", the newest health show with a difference, starts June 17 (Saturday) at 11:30 a.m. to 12 noon on ABC 5. The show will feature medical experts of different fields tackling the latest, the most controversial and most relevant topics from medicine, health and wellness, to the simple basic care. It's hosted by one of the country's youngest Neurosurgeon, Dr. Rhoderick "Bong" Casis.

This health show gives a twist to your typical health shows. It gives different perspective to a variety of health issues, and offers the audience diverse options on how to address their health needs. On its launch, "Generation Rx" will tackle the controversies surrounding energy drinks.

"The Energy Drink War". In this world filled with stress and fatigue, most people depend on energy drinks to give them a boost of energy and enable them to get through the day. But what exactly are energy drinks? How can it give energy to our body? Are there any dangers in drinking energy drinks, These are just a few questions that the experts will answer in Generation Rx.

On Saturday, Casis will discuss the origin of energy drinks and the latest energy boosters in the market. He will be joined by experts Dr. Evan Glenn S. Vista, Internal Medicine from St. Lukes Medical Center and Dr. Lemuel M. Tocjayao; Internal Medicine, Cardiology, and Diabetes specialist from Delos Santos –STI Medical Center and to give the audience an idea on the latest energy booster in the market, representatives from various products will take part in the discussion: from Bacchus, Doy Lukban, sales manager; for Dong-A Pharma Philippines Inc; from Thunder, Jeffrey C. Mangali, president of the First Philippine Thunder Corp with Fortunato P. Perez, vice president; and from Rhodiola Capsules, Nelson Uy, president of The Body Farm Corp with Alfred Ong, vice president.

Aside from the discussion on "The Energy Drink War," "Generation Rx" will also feature a wealth of practical medical tips and trivia in "med.com", starting with trivia about the basic framework of life. In "Health Trip", we'll take a trip down the road to beautiful skin and take a peek on the latest in skin care. And for accurate health information for healthy living, "Healthy Blitz" will highlight a child's brain development.

TransCo

Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF INSTRUMENT TRANSFORMER TEST SET

Ref. No. PB060516-PP0086

1. The *National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region* (TRANSCO-HO) through the *2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board*, intends to apply the sum of ***Php 14,400,000.00*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***PR No. MSG-06-000018957***. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for *the supply and delivery of two (2) sets Instrument Transformer Test Set*. Delivery of the GOODS is required ***sixty (60) calendar days from receipt of approved Order***. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from ***June 15, 2006 to July 11, 2006*** at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of ***Php 2,000.00***. The method of payment will be ***Cash***. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The *TRANSCO-HO* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***June 26, 2006/2:00 p.m.*** at *the address below. Requests for clarification on the bid documents should be submitted before the Pre-bid Conference.*
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***July 12, 2006/10:00 a.m.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following forms and amount or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted:

Form of Security	Amount
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1% of ABC)	Php 144,000.00
2. Bank Guarantee (1.5% of ABC)	Php 216,000.00
3. Surety Bond (2.5% of ABC)	Php 360,000.00
4. Foreign Government Guarantee (100% of ABC)	Php 14,400,000.00

7. Bid opening shall be on ***July 12, 2006/10:00 a.m.*** at the ***Admin Conference Room same address below***. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder.or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No.: (632) 981-2207 / Fax No. (632) 922-8432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – June 16, 2006)

AFP RETIREMENT AND SEPARATION BENEFITS SYSTEM
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR SECURITY SERVICES

1. The **AFP RETIREMENT AND SEPARATION BENEFITS SYSTEM (AFP-RSBS)** now invites Bids from Eligible Bidders for the Procurement of Security Services for the following AFP-RSBS properties as stated below:

PROJECT	LOCATION	NO. OF GUARDS	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)	COST OF ELIGIBILITY AND BID DOCUMENTS (non-refundable)
Security Services for IPMO	Taguig, Metro Manila	14	P2,463,999.38	P5,000.00
Security Service for Iloilo Property	Iloilo City	10	P1,560,000.00	P3,000.00
Security Services for General Santos Property	General Santos City	7	P960,000.00	P1,000.00
Security Services for RSBS Compound	Cam Aguinaldo, Quezon City	5	P780,000.00	P1,000.00

The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietosrhips, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
3. Interested parties shall submit proposal/s on any or all of the aforementioned projects. One project is equivalent to a single award or contract, separate and distinct from each other
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the **AFP-RSBS** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m.*
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents will be available for issuance to interested applicants from July 10, 2006 and may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount as above-stated. The method of payment will be *cash*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The *AFP-RSBS* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on July 28, 2006, 2:00 p.m. at **AFP-RSBS Board Room, AFPRSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.**
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 9:00 a.m. of August 10, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of *cash, check or bank guarantee* and in the amount specified in the Bid Data Sheet or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted
8. Bid opening shall be on **August 10, 2006**, 9:05 a.m. at the **AFP-RSBS Board Room, AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City**. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. Additonal information shall be furnished upon request. All communication should be addressed to the undersigned at the following address:

Bids and Awards Committee
AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Avenue,
Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 9114071 local 204/289/281

10. The *AFP-RSBS reserves* the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **GEN. FRANKLIN C. ACOSTA (Ret)**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – June 16 & 23, 2006)

Festival of Phil-Russian culture set at the CCP

A PHILIPPINE-RUSSIAN CULTURAL FESTIVAL WILL BE staged on June 14-18 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP). The event, which celebrates the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Philippines and the Russian Federation, is held in cooperation with the Friendship Society of the Philippines and Russia Inc. (FSPRI), and the Russian Embassy in Manila.

The week-long Festival will feature an exhibit opening on June 14, 6pm at the CCP 2nd Floor Hallway and screening of Russian films at the CCP Dream Theater on same date. Both exhibit and film showings will run from June 14 to 18.

Come June 16 at 8pm, the stars of the world-famous Bolshoi Theatre Ballet will take center stage at the CCP Main Theater.

A gala performance featuring Filipino and Russian artists will take place on June 17, 8pm at the CCP Main Theater starring The Stars of Bolshoi Theatre, Ballet Manila with Lisa Macuja-Elizalde, Artistic Director, San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of conductor Felix Korobov, and internationally acclaimed Russian pianist Denis Matsuev.

On June 18, at 8pm, Matsuev, Honored Artist of Russia and 1st prize Int'l. Tchaikovsky Competition winner, returns with the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra to be conducted by Felix Korobov.

Tickets are available at the CCP Box Office and TicketWorld Outlets: National Bookstore, Robinson's Department Stores, Tower Records, Music Museum, CCP, Ayala Center Inc. and TicketWorld Inc.

For inquiries, call the CCP Box Office at 832-3704 and Ticketworld at National Bookstores and Tower Records (891-9999) or contact Valentina Nebogatova, 1st Vice-President of FSPRI at e-mail vnebogat2@hotmail.com/ otec_ibu@hotmail.com

13 Mindanao projects worth ₱1.58B get perks

Cagayan de Oro leg of BOI roadshow attracts SMEs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FAVILA

THIRTEEN PROJECTS in northern Mindanao worth P1.58 billion were granted tax holidays and other perks during the Cagayan de Oro City leg of an ongoing Board of Investments roadshow.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila, who is also BOI chair, said the event held May 25-26 catered to applicants qualified for the agency's simplified registration process or the so-called one-day registration system.

Projects covered under the SRP are those that are "straightforward," which do not need the board's discretion or involve policy issues.

Favila said the listed projects include the P545-million new feed mill plant of San Miguel Corp.'s Food Division; the P500-million steel billet and steel bars project of Elegant Chemical Corp. and the P240-million mass housing project of Liberty Land Corp.

Also, the trade chief said the two-day sortie represented the second leg of BOI's program to reach out to micro and small-sized enterprises.

Most of these SMEs are not informed about available incentives from the agency or do not have the means to go to BOI's offices.

Micro and small projects that were listed include Arriba Telecontact Inc.'s P15-million call center; Sun Q Technical Trading Co.'s P3-million venture in the export of dried mango and other fruits products; and Mackdel Trading's P1.5-million venture in processed fish.

The 13 approved projects are expected to create 1,044 jobs once they start operations.

"The roadshow is meant to hasten business activity in the country by encouraging formation of (micro, small and medium-sized enterprises) in the regions," Favila said.

"We are very much encouraged by the turnout of businessmen from Region 10 (which covers the provinces of Bukidnon, Camiguin, Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental and Lanao del Norte)," he added.

In an earlier interview, BOI managing head Elmer C. Hernandez said many small projects would have been unviable without tax perks and other fiscal and nonfiscal incentives.

Favila said the outreach program had shown that a lot of businesses were being generated in the regions and that there was a need to make government services more accessible to businesses.

DTI data showed that in 2005, Region 10 chalked up P1.77 billion worth of investments or 1.08 percent of the total P163.88 billion BOI approvals.

The first leg of the outreach program for micro and small businesses was held in early May in Cauayan, Isabela, where 12 projects worth a total of about P183 million were registered.

According to Hernandez, it was now the time for BOI to gear its efforts toward investment promotion in the provinces since the system for attracting foreign investments into the country was well in place.

He added that certain requirements were relaxed to allow micro and small-sized businesses to qualify for fiscal incentives, which include tax holidays and duty-free importation of capital equipment.

The government classifies businesses with assets worth up to P3 million as micro enterprises and those with between P3 million and P15 million as small.

FISH FOR SALE. Traders prepare some of the fish to be sold at the Tunggol boat landing in Datu Montawal, Maguindanao (inset). At least 30 boats cruise the Rio Grande de Mindanao every day to transport goods and passengers to and from Tunggol. The facility was built by the USAID-funded Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) Program under its Community Infrastructure Program (CIP). The GEM Program is being implemented under the supervision of the Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo).

IPO seizes ₱50M in fake products, cites cooperation with Customs

THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY Office has seized P50 million worth of fake high-end products in cooperation with the Bureau of Customs.

IPO Director General Adrian S. Cristobal Jr. yesterday said the haul included shoes, bags, wearing apparels, school supplies, novelty items and watches with Lacoste, Adidas, Fila, Reebok, Puma, Polo Ralph Lauren, Nokia, Nike and Swatch brands.

IPO said the goods were seized from the warehouses of RAN Properties Management Corp. and RAN Distribution Network Inc. along A. Rivera Street in Tondo, Manila.

Cristobal said the bust was a result of close cooperation with the Bureau of Customs, where the IPO has set up an embedded unit, as well as the reactivated Task Force on Anti-Smuggling.

Cristobal said the IPO and the BOC had agreed to ink a pact related to mapping out the roles of each agency in complementing each other's efforts as well as holding training for customs agents, especially in detecting and identifying genuine products from fakes, principally through their marks and other distinctive features.

He said the two agencies were also in talks about the possible sharing of each other's database to effect stricter monitoring of counterfeit products, especially those coming in from abroad.

Further, Cristobal said the IPO was set to enter into an agreement with the National Telecommunications Commission to cooperate on fighting piracy in the broadcast industry.

Cristobal had said efforts to curb violation of intellectual property rights would be stepped up as a study showed the government could raise some P1.3 billion in tax revenues from reduced software piracy alone.

Citing industry data, the IPO chief said the country's information technology sector, which accounts for at least $1 billion in revenues last year, could nearly double in the next three years if software piracy was reduced by a tenth from the current level.

Cristobal said the IPO was exerting extra effort to ensure that achievements in protecting IP rights would translate to economic and social benefits. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

MVP wants control of paper

By Daxim L. Lucas

TELECOMMUNICATIONS MOgul Manuel V. Pangilinan wants to acquire 100 percent of BusinessWorld Publishing Corp., having recently cornered an initial 30 percent stake in the firm which prints the country's oldest business newspaper.

In a briefing, Pangilinan said BusinessWorld's employees, who own the remaining 67 percent of the firm, must decide whether they would hold on to their shares or "cash out now" and sell them to him.

"This is something they will have to agree on," he said, although he did not indicate whether he had already made a formal offer to the publishing firm's employees.

The company's by-laws allow the company's retirement fund—which owns two-thirds of the firm—to sell its shares to an external investor only with a unanimous vote, as a safeguard against hostile takeover attempts.

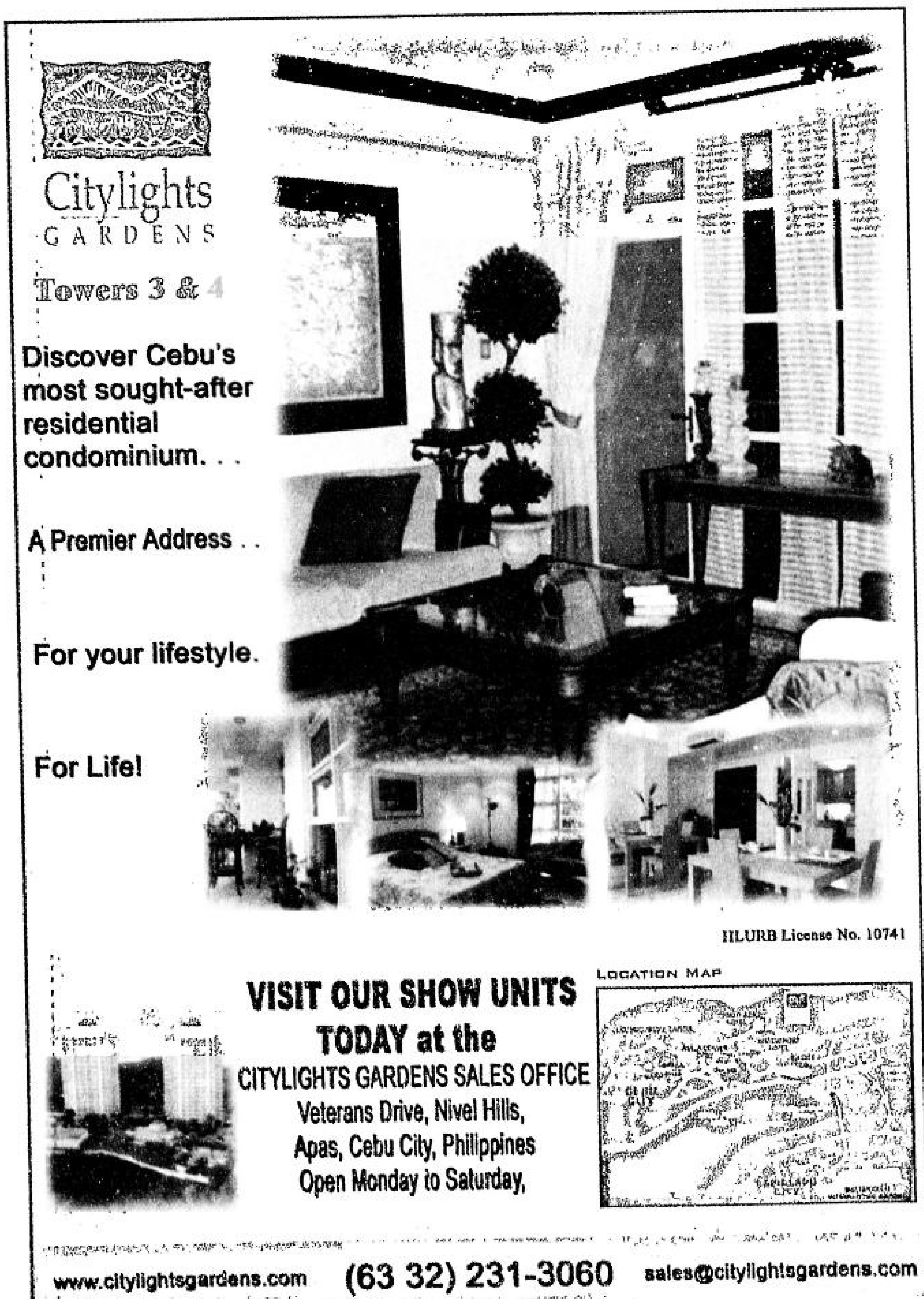
Based on the price he agreed to pay for a third of the company, Pangilinan will need to shell out another P80 million to P85 million for complete control of the publishing firm.

At the same time, the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. chair said he expected the deal on his initial foray into BusinessWorld to be sealed "within two to three weeks."

He revealed that he paid "between P30 million and P40 million" for a 30-percent stake in the firm, which he bought from businessman Iñigo Zobel.

Zobel, son of the late business magnate Enrique Zobel, is the chair and the single biggest shareholder of BusinessWorld.

He holds three board seats.



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DOTC orders toll operator to replace defective e-passes

THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT wants the Toll Regulatory Board and the operator of the southbound Skyway system to reimburse buyers of defective electronic tags, which are supposed to facilitate travel along the elevated highway.

The Department of Transportation and Communications made this statement after receiving complaints from motorists about the "poor quality" of e-pass units allegedly being sold by Citra Metro Manila Tollway Corp., the private firm which operates the high-speed toll road.

"DOTC has received numerous complaints from e-pass users about the defective devices after being used only for several months," DOTC Assistant Secretary Roberto R. Castañares said in a statement.

He added that motorists have also complained about "bureaucratic delays" in the replacement of defective e-passes.

"We believe Citra should replace the defective e-passes for free or with large discounts because the motorists had no choice when they bought them, Citra being a virtual monopoly," said Castañares, who also heads the department's Presidential Action Office.

The e-pass is an electronic transponder popular with motorists who live in the southern part of Metro Manila.

Attached to the windshield, the transponder allows them to drive through designated e-pass lanes, with the toll fee automatically deducted from their accounts.

It costs P2,300, and must be reloaded periodically by buying additional credits or through automated teller machines, depending on motorists' frequency and distance of travel along the Skyway.

Castañares explained that the defective e-passes also aggravate traffic at the entry and exit points of the Skyway, causing inconvenience to motorists, especially during rush hours.

Castañares urged motorists with defective e-passes to file their complaints with the transportation department by writing DOTC Secretary Leandro Mendoza directly or by calling the DOTC Action Center hotline at 7890. *Daxim L. Lucas*

Mirant to provide electricity to 170 barangays by end-2006

By Abigail L. Ho

MIRANT PHILIPPINES CORP. AIMS TO COMplete the electrification of at least 170 remote barangays in various parts of the country by the end of the year.

"We are simultaneously working on the electrification of several barangays in some of the remotest parts of the country," said Mirant Philippines chef executive officer Jose Leviste Jr.

"We are actively pursuing these projects to help the Philippine government bring the benefits of electricity to our people and hasten the development of their communities," Leviste added.

He said providing electricity to these remote barangays would help jumpstart economic activities in the areas and lead to better lives for their residents.

The company's barangay electrification is being done in partnership with the Department of Energy, as part of the government's program to achieve full barangay electrification by 2008.

The 170 barangays that Mirant aims to give electricity to by the end of the year is part of the additional 500 barangays that it has committed to electrify from 2005 to 2008.

Mirant last year provided electricity to 147 barangays, 133 of which were in Mindanao, 11 in Luzon, and three in the Visayas.

Of the 170 barangays to be energized this year, around 90 will be in Mindanao, 55 in Luzon, and 25 in the Visayas.

The barangay electrification program is under Mirant Philippines' flagship corporate social responsibility program Barangay Electrification Assistance for Countryside Development (Project Beacon) that has so far energized more than 1,000 barangays from 2001 to 2004 in 33 provinces.

The company has invested some P1 billion for the program, putting up around 11,000 kilometers of distribution lines in different far-flung barangays all over the country.

THE ASIAN Development Bank extended a grant worth $50,000 to help clean the town market's waste.

Treatment plant helps town rid of pollution

ADB-funded facility cleans wastewater

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
PDI Visayas Bureau

LILOAN, CEBU—A FEW MONTHS AFTER the completion of the wastewater treatment plant here, the seawater at the back of the municipality's public market has turned from murky to clear.

Time was when the residents at the back of the market had to live with the foul odor coming from the untreated wastewater and solid waste discharged by a pipe.

Today, the treated wastewater discharged into the sea is clear and free of debris, and only a faint odor can be detected.

The issue about polluted seawater off Lilo-an was first raised by a local journalist who cited a memorial garden as the cause, Mayor Maria B. Sevilla said in a recent briefing here.

Sevilla said later tests on the seawater revealed that the pollution came from the discharge pipe at the back of the market, and not from the drainage pipe from the memorial garden.

While she was angry when the story about pollution came out, the mayor said it had benefited Lilo-an since the problem caught the attention of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and its in-house expert Andreas Konig.

Konig noted that tests conducted on the seawater taken from the discharge point before the treatment plant was put up showed that the coastal water quality in the area was deteriorating.

Konig said this was due to the untreated wastewater from the public market being discharged directly to the sea.

The installation of a treatment plant was deemed the best solution, and with a $50,000-grant from the Asian Development Bank, the project was implemented in March 2004 and inaugurated November last year.

About $46,000 was spent for the facility while the balance financed the social preparation of the community and the testing conducted on the seawater, he said.

The project includes the construction of the facility, which has a capacity to treat 60 cubic meters of wastewater a day, and the renovation of the market toilets.

Tests conducted last January 2006 found that the fecal coliform went down from nine million per 100 ml to only 2,300 per 100 ml, he said.

The DENR conducted a series of meetings with the market vendors to convince them of the need to implement the project.

The market vendors were told that they, along with the public toilets at the market, were the major source of wastewater, which came from vegetables, fruits, fish and meat.

Joselito Baring, project consultant, noted that there was minimal resistance from the residents in the area.

They realized that the facility would help address their sanitation problem.

The Lilo-an Community Multi-purpose Cooperative, a spin off from the Market Vendor Association, will take over the operation and maintenance of the facility, which is owned by the municipality of Lilo-an.

Under the memorandum of agreement, the municipality allows the cooperative to collect fees for the use of the renovated public toilet and the maintenance of the wastewater facility.

But the Lilo-an municipal government has the right to rescind the agreement if the cooperative will violate the terms of the agreement even after three written reprimands.

The members of the cooperative have agreed to pay a daily fee of P5 for the maintenance of the wastewater facility, Konig said.

Highlands ...

From page B5

opment inside the exclusive Tagaytay Highlands and Midlands complex.

Designed with family-oriented golfers in mind, The Horizon will have several golfing and leisure amenities.

Construction of The Horizon's first six (out of 12) buildings is now in full swing and is scheduled for completion by July this year. All Horizon units come in four bedrooms with an approximate floor area of 143 square meters.

Another major project, dubbed The Woodridge Park, costs roughly P700 to P800 million. It will feature two- to four-bedroom units, approximately 170 to 280 square meters, a few loft units, cathedral high ceilings and fireplaces for penthouse units.

The project is forecast to generate P1.8 billion in revenues for 119 units. The first phase involving 65 units of The Woodridge Park is targeted for completion by the end of 2007.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Construction Management (CM) Consultancy Services for the BSP Branch Building in Zamboanga

The Scope of Construction Management work includes among others quantity surveying services, preparation of detailed estimates, value engineering, full construction management and supervision for the proposed BSP Branch Building in Zamboanga.

1 The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through the BSP 2006 Building Construction Account intends to apply the sum of **three million two hundred fifty thousand pesos** (P3,250,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for BAC-INFRA-06-07. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals.

2 **The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas** now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and short listing for the construction management consultancy services. Interested consultants must submit their LOIs and accomplished Eligibility Documents on or before 23 June 2006 / 11:30 AM at the BAC Secretariat, Room 204, 2nd Floor, Five Storey Building, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sts. Manila. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. Eligibility documents may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat on June 08 to 19, 2006 for a non-refundable fee of P500.00, Room 204, 2nd Floor, Five Storey Building at the BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Streets, Manila. Only those that are short listed will be entitled to submit bids.

3. The BAC shall draw up the short list of consultants from those who have submitted Letters of Intent and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A). The short list of eligible bidders shall consist of up to five (5) consultants.

The firm's applicable experience **(completed comparable and related consultancy services and know cases of prior performance)** shall be used as criteria for short listing.

4. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only bids from short listed consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas shall evaluate bids using the **Quality-Cost Based Evaluation** procedure. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.

5 The minimum eligibility requirements are as follows:
  5.1 The consultant must have been in operation for the last fifteen (15) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this Invitation) engaging in the lawful practice of the type of consulting services called for in this invitation.
  5.2 The consultant must have rendered within the last ten (10) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this Invitation) Construction Management consultancy services for at least five (5) completed new construction projects of similar nature/magnitude/complexity as the proposed BSP projects and must be able to submit a certification of satisfactory performance from the client for at least three (3) of the required five (5) projects.
  5.3 The principal or Managing Officer must be a Registered Architect or Engineer with at least fifteen (15) years experience in actual construction work and construction management.
  5.4 The Project Manager for the projects must be a registered Architect or Civil Engineer with a minimum of fifteen (15) years experience in actual construction work five (5) years of which are in construction management.
  5.5 The Resident Construction Management Team should at least be Registered Architects/Engineers, each with a minimum of ten (10) years combined design/construction management and construction experience where the Construction Management experience should at least be five (5) years. The minimum number required for the team should at least be three (3) excluding the principal and project manager.
  5.6 In case of a joint venture, a valid joint venture agreement shall be required. The joint venture must have rendered construction management consultancy services for at least two (2) completed projects of similar magnitude as the proposed BSP project.
  5.7 A consultant with at least two (2) on-going and/or awarded BSP consultancy projects at the time of this invitation will not be allowed to participate in this consultancy service requirement.
  5.8 For those firms with previous or current Design Consultancy Services with the BSP, a certificate of satisfactory performance issued by the Bank must be submitted.

6. **For inquiries, please call BAC Secretariat - telephone no. 524-7011 local 3143.**

7 **The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas** reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI – June 5 & 16, 2006)

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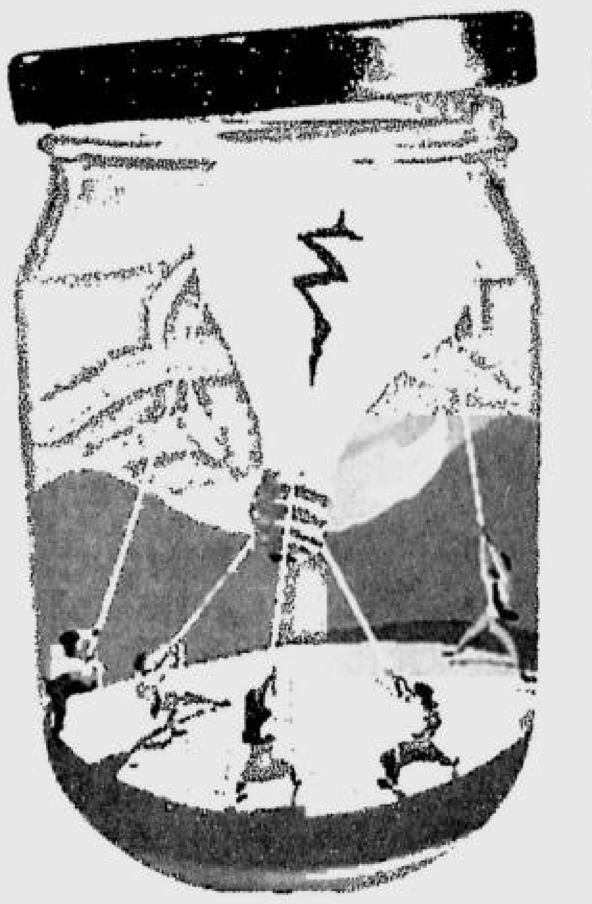

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(Organizational Survey Assessing Creativity & Innovation Climate available in a separate package.)

BUSINESS

Ranks of unemployed swelled to 2.93M in April

**By Leila B. Salaverria
and Doris C. Dumlao**

THERE ARE NOW 2.93 MILLION UNEMPLOYED people in the country as of April 2006—an increase from the 2.91 million recorded in the same period last year, according to the National Statistics Office.

With the 0.7-percent increase in the number of unemployed, the country's unemployment rate had inched up to 8.2 percent in April against the 8.1 percent rate in January as fresh college graduates joined the labor force, the NSO yesterday, citing the preliminary results of its latest Philippine Labor Force Survey.

The NSO, which conducts its labor force survey four times a year, defines "unemployed" as those over 15 years old who are without work and are currently looking for work."

But according to the Department of Labor and Employment, the 8.2 percent unemployment rate was lower than the 8.3 percent registered in the same period last year.

Also, the NSO reported an increase in employment as of April 2006.

Officials said employment grew 2.5 percent, which translates to 803,000 additional jobs.

This brings the total employment in the country to 33.024 million, according to DOLE Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas.

The NSO also said that the underemployment rate has likewise gone down to 25.4 percent or 8.401 million in April 2006 from 26.1 percent or 8.421 million in the same period last year.

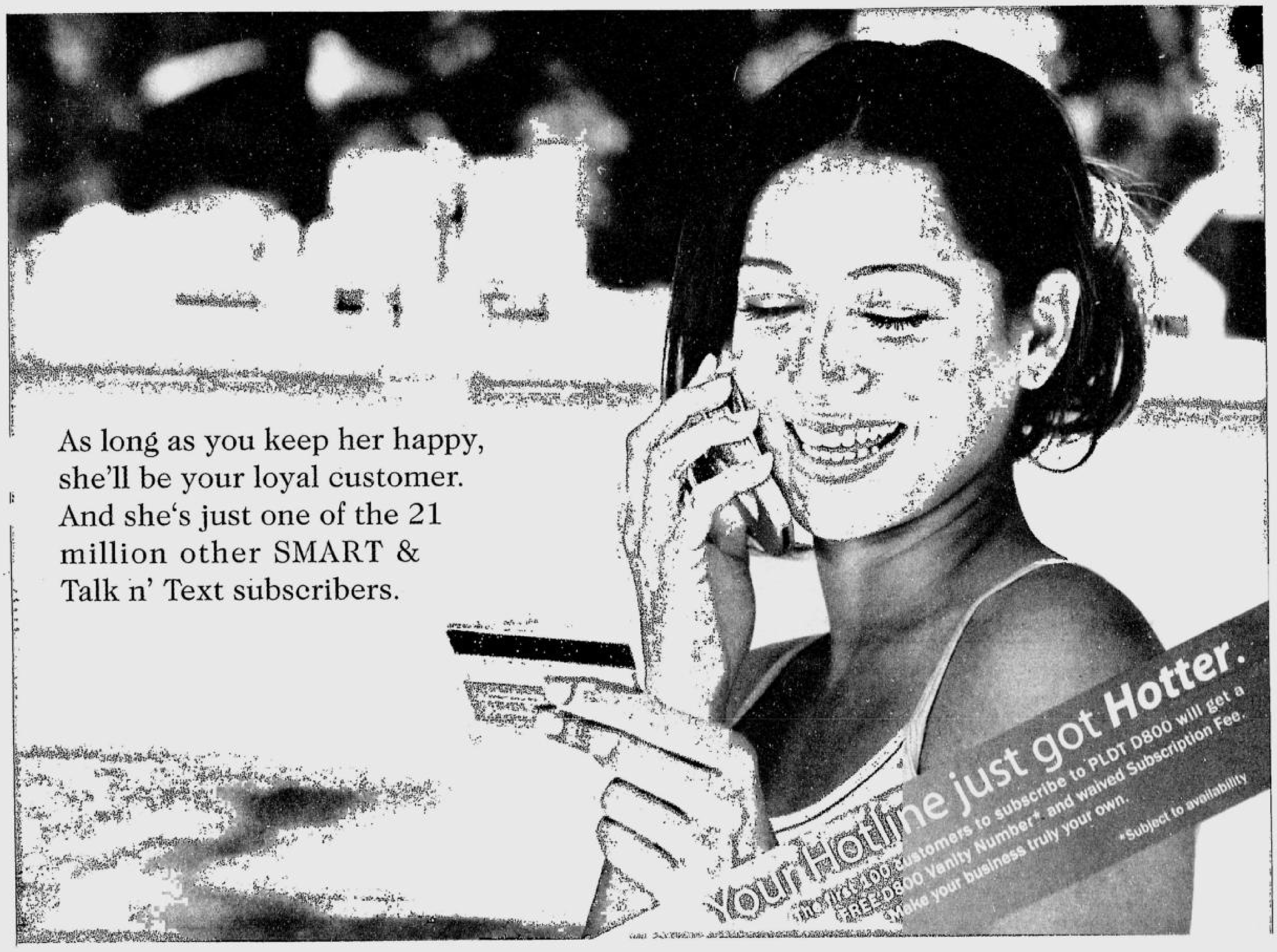
The total labor force as of April 2006 was pegged at 36 million—or 64.9 percent of the 55.4 million people aged 15 and above.

The rest of the segment of the population who are not part of the labor force are housewives, students, disabled or retired people. Majority, or 70.8 percent, of them are female.

The NSO also reported that the number of salaried workers totaled 16.7 million, while the number of own-account workers was pegged at 12.4 million. Another 3.9 million are unpaid family workers.

Despite the increase in employment, the NSO also reported that full-time employment, or those who work for 40 hours and over a week, went down to 18.7 million in April 2006 from the 20.1 million in the same period last year.

Part-time workers, or those who work less than 40 hours a week, increased by 2 million, or to 13.5 million from 11.5 million last year.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VENUE: WEST COURSE, WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB DATE: JUNE 15 & 16, 2006, 6:30 SHOTGUN

「中菲友誼盃」女子菲華高爾夫球邀請賽
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FILIPINO-CHINESE LADIES INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT
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FASHION

The daddy makeovers

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GRAPHIC DESIGN
TEAM MANILA GRAPHIC DESIGN STUDIO
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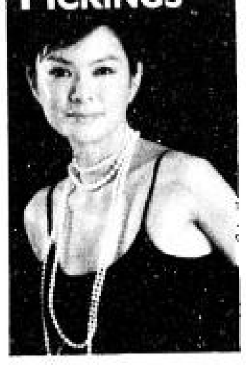
MAKEUP BEAUTY BAR

GRAPHIC DESIGNER: MARLON RUBIO

Kelly Misa, Olivia Francisco and Juliana Revilla eagerly played 'stage daughters' to create new looks for their dads

APPLES' PICKINGS



Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

TO CELEBRATE FATHER'S Day, INQUIRER Fashion and Store Specialists Inc. asked three bona fide daddy's girls and their loving dads to participate in a special fashion makeover. Tables were turned as Kelly Misa, Olivia Francisco and Juliana Revilla eagerly played "stage daughters" to more-than-willing dads Roberto, Lito and Johnny, respectively.

With the help of expert stylist and former Cosmopolitan Magazine fashion editor and former associate fashion editor of Summit Media Inc., Donna Cuna-Pita, the three daughters created new looks for their dads.

The makeover mission was a huge success, as you can see from the before and after photos. But what really made the whole exercise a coup was not just the new and improved, hipper, younger-looking dads.

It was the fact that the makeover was really more about laughter, bonding and having a grand old time.

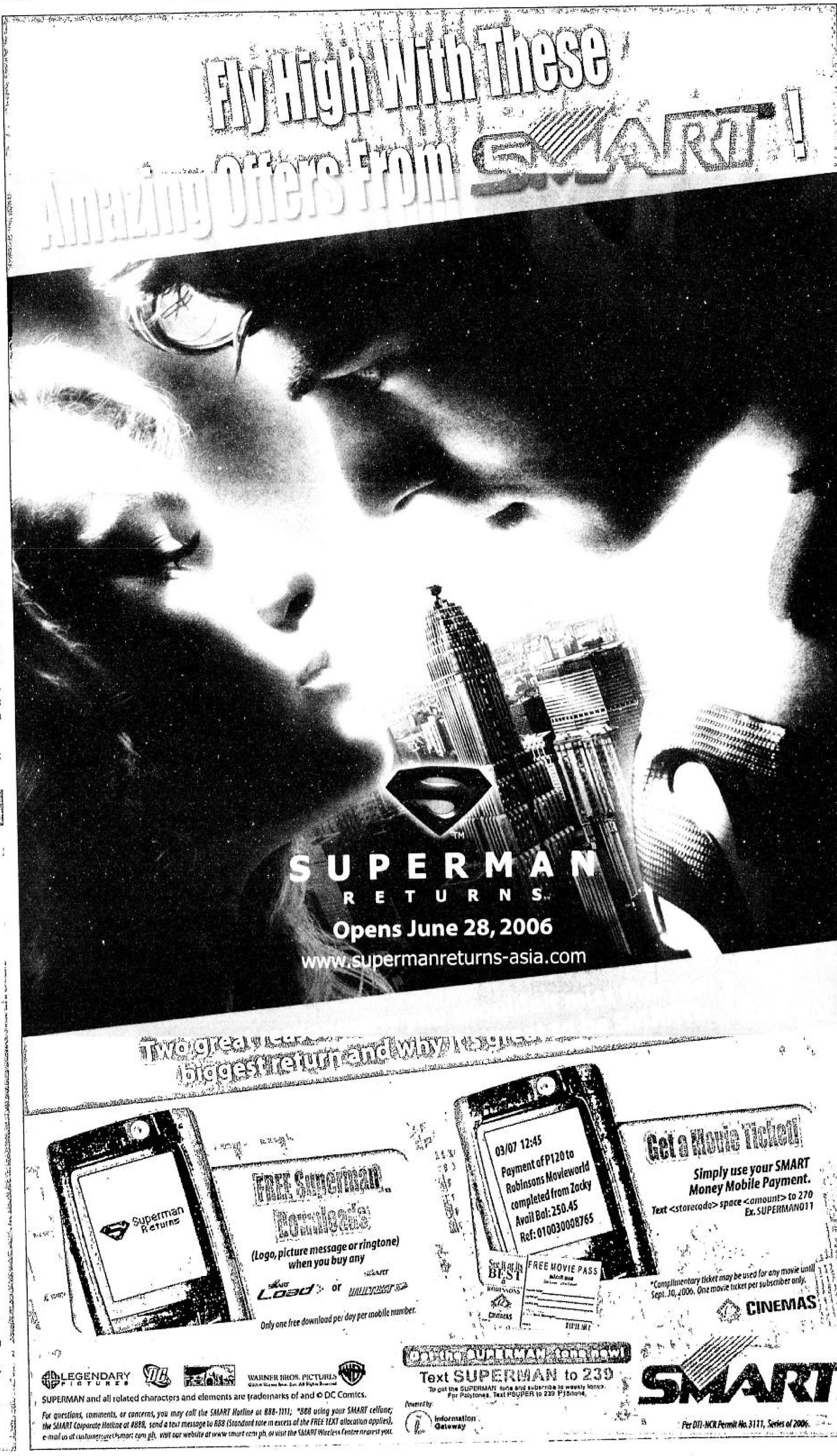
Turn to page C2 and read on about our featured dads' and daughters' candid thoughts on makeovers, fashion philosophies and even fatherly advice.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

Dandy dad

Stylist and fashion authority **Donna Cuna-Pita** shares some easy tips for daughters who want to instantly update Daddy's look:

- Change is in the details. Loosen up the tucked-in shirt, wear the pants a bit lower on the waist, mess up those folded sleeves. These small changes will instantly make your dad's look more modern and hip.
- Encourage him to try the latest "in" colors. He might not be ready for the slim-fit shirts yet, but he can certainly try out those cute sorbet-colored sports shirts and striped lime polos. As with most mature people, Dad would most probably have a formula for dressing up. Introducing color first will make the transition less disruptive and abrupt.
- Stay true to his fashion personality. Is your dad a prep-boy or an ageless hippie? Knowing his personality will guide you in making suggestions that he would welcome. For an executive dad who likes to stick to more traditional cuts, a pair of sleek flat-front trousers (as opposed to his pleated pants) would stand a bigger chance of being worn than, say, ultra-low jeans.
- Buy clothes and accessories for him. Don't wait for him to shell out money for a shirt you know will look great on him. Get it yourself and he'll most probably wear it every chance he gets, not necessarily because he likes it, but because his precious little girl got it for him.
- Praise him when he experiments with his look. Let Daddy know how great he looks when he unbuttons the first few buttons of his sports shirt. Compliment him when he decides to wear that salmon (yes, it's not pink) shirt you got him for Christmas. Encourage your dad's foray into fashion and always remind him that, high-waist or low-waist, in your eyes, he will forever be the best-looking guy in the whole world.



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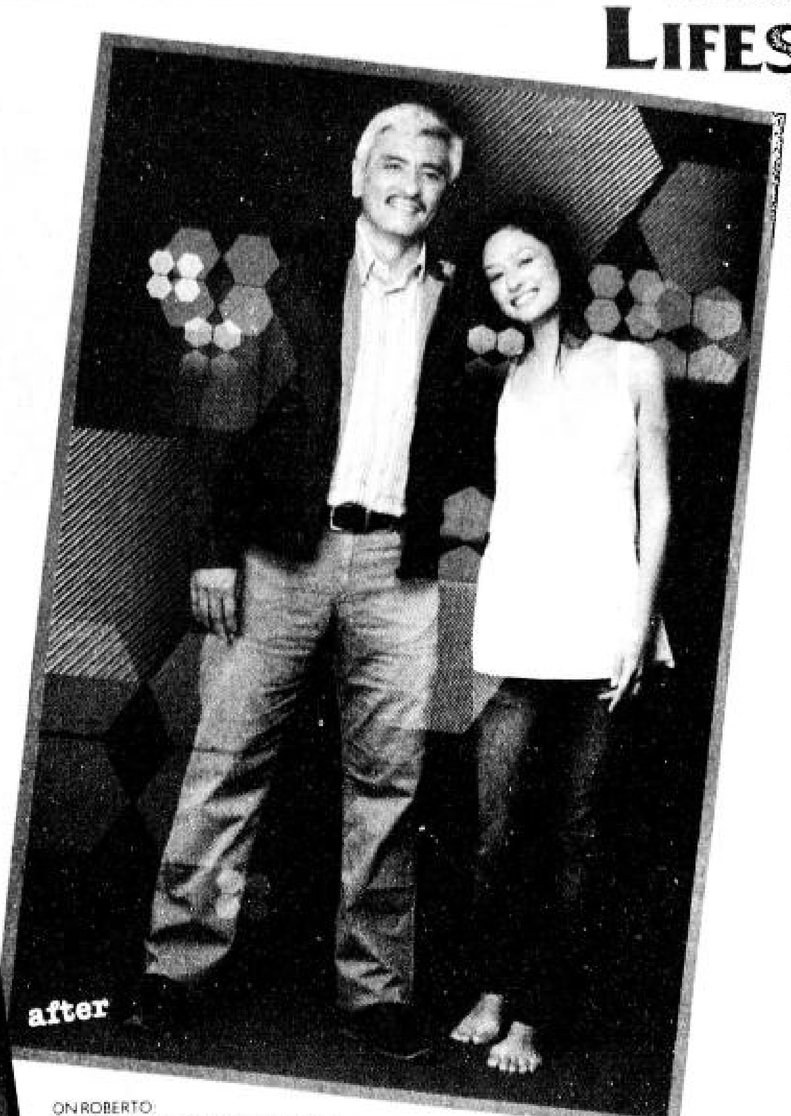

ON ROBERTO:
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The daddy makeovers

The Revillas

Name: Johnny Revilla

Age: 51

Occupation: Businessman, restaurateur

Fashion philosophy: I'm basically a jeans and T-shirt kind of a guy. I love comfortable clothes. I'm not too much into what's hip or in.

On Juliana's picks: I loved the Hugo Boss shirt very much and liked the whole shorts look. I guess I'm blessed since I still can get away with wearing funky stuff and not look like I'm trying too hard.

Makeover experience: It was fun. Anything we can do together always makes me feel good. Her choices were nice. She's got good taste. She gets that from her mother.

Thoughts on fatherhood: When my father used to discipline me, he kept telling me, "This will hurt me more than it will hurt you!" I always thought he was nuts, until I became a father also. It does hurt more when you're a father. Raising children is quite difficult and many times painful, especially when you have to do what's perceived to be best for them. But nothing gives me more joy or drive than my children.

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Age: 13 (in July)

Occupation: Student

Dad's basic wardrobe: Simple. He loves his jeans. But Dad always dresses well when he has to. Dad really doesn't follow any style.

Makeover experience: It was fun. I was laughing the whole time.

Dad's new look: I wanted to see my dad looking more hip. I think we achieved that.

Special moments: Any moment I share with my dad is special. He always cooks for us on Sundays and that's very special to all of us. I love helping him cook and we enjoy his food so much. I love it when he just hugs me. He's Dad, what else can I say?

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The Misas

Name: Roberto Misa

Age: 51

Occupation: CEO of an orthopedic company

Fashion philosophy: My teen years were the '70s. Then, as it is now, anything goes! Like my choice of music, I give everyone carte blanche for self-expression and pick out what suits my mood. Appreciation of fashion is one thing and buying clothes for myself is another. As I get older, I tend to dress to fill roles: as CEO, as a country club bum, as a sports enthusiast, as a man in midlife crisis, etc.

On Kelly's picks: Kelly picked out clothes that were casual and colorful. When I first saw the clothes, I had my doubts that they would work out together. But to my surprise, they did blend nicely and they also made me look slimmer and younger.

Words of wisdom: I was stumped with the philosophy of fashion but philosophy on fatherhood comes very easily to me. Our children are not ours. They belong to themselves. They do not live for us or we for them. Fathers should teach their children to love themselves, and we should support their ambitions and dreams.

Name: Kelly Misa

Age: 24

Occupation: Model, host

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Makeover experience: It was fun and weird to actually be in a shoot with my dad for the very first time. Only because I still remember tagging along on his shoots way back when he still modeled, and I would be awestruck with the whole experience. Now that I model for a living, this shoot made me feel like a kid again. At the same time, it was a lot of fun to see my dad in clothes I had chosen. He didn't look bad at all.

Cherished memories: My dad has always driven me to and from school and sometimes some shoots for as long as I can remember, and my favorite moments with him were actually when he was driving me somewhere. I like it because there's nothing else to do but talk, and that's probably when we've had conversations about the funniest, most outrageous and most random things.

The Franciscos

Name: Lito Francisco

Age: 60

Occupation: VP-Treasurer, Philippine Realty and Holdings Corporation

Fashion philosophy: At my age, uppermost in my choice of wardrobe is comfort. I am no longer the individual who wears clothes just because it's fashionable. I am not out to compete to be seen. I am not a follower of the saying in marketing "improve the packaging to improve the product." Most of the time I'm in the corporate world, so I am very comfortable wearing a barong or a shirt and tie. However, when I am with friends, I dress up casually. Comfort is it!

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Fatherly advice: Well, on hindsight, maybe we should have done things that we were not able to do because we were too busy trying to make a living. I think the most important thing about being a father is spending time with your children. Being there not so much to influence them but to give them the assurance that a helping hand is always available. Sometimes fathers expect their children to achieve things that they themselves failed to achieve. We should keep in mind that our children have their own lives, and we are just there to offer guidance and moral support in all their endeavors.

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Name: Olivia Francisco

Age: 28

Occupation: Dentist

Makeover experience: It was fun! But more than the makeover, it was having a photo shoot with my dad that was new! Before the shoot, he kept on asking what was going to happen, what the shoot was all about, what it was for. I think I lost a pound just stressing over how I would get there on time because I was so excited. It was my turn to be a stage daughter!

Dad's new look: I just wanted to give my dad a fresh look. I think I was successful in doing that. My dad's pretty easy to dress because he looks good in anything!

Fave moments with dad: My dad's very malambing and very maalaga. We used to go out of town with his tennis group from the village and after my yaya would give me a shower, I'd sit on his lap and he'd comb my wet hair. During another out-of-town trip, he helped me memorize 50 words and their meanings while we were on the road. I didn't know how to memorize so that's when I learned how to do it. He's also a math wizard (he got a final grade of 100 when he was in college) and he used to tutor me whenever I asked him to. I would get low grades in every other subject except math! I realized he was a terror when he was teaching in AIM, DLSU and ADMU, but I never felt it at all! So, I guess he was just different with me and my siblings.

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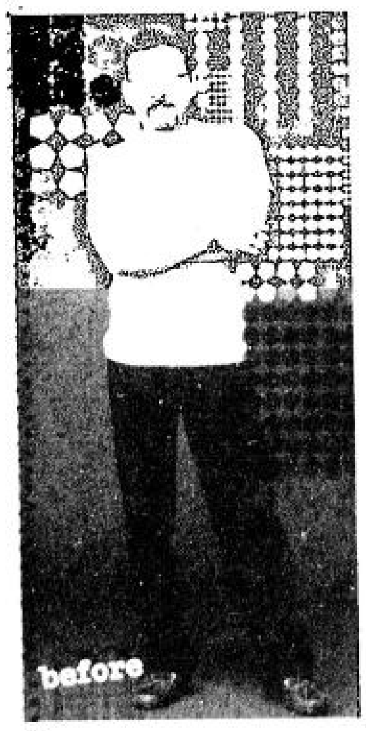

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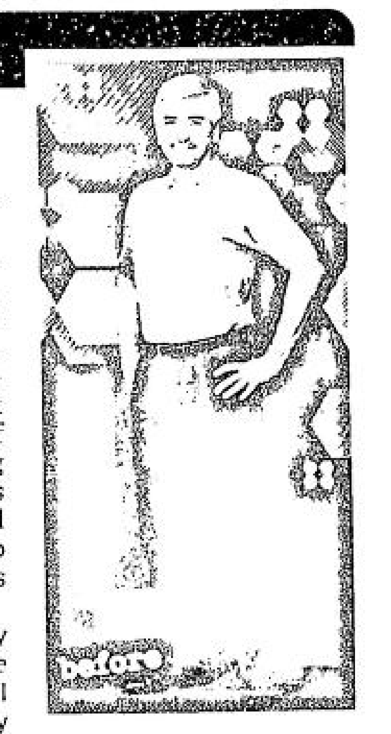

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Age: 28

Occupation: Dentist

Makeover experience: It was fun! But more than the makeover, it was having a photo shoot with my dad that was new! Before the shoot, he kept on asking what was going to happen, what the shoot was all about, what it was for. I think I lost a pound just stressing over how I would get there on time because I was so excited. It was my turn to be a stage daughter!

Dad's new look: I just wanted to give my dad a fresh look. I think I was successful in doing that. My dad's pretty easy to dress because he looks good in anything!

PHOTOGRAPHY TOTO LABRADOR
STYLING DONNA CUNA-PITA
GRAPHIC DESIGN
TEAM MANILA GRAPHIC DESIGN STUDIO
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SHOES KENNETH COLE AND POLO RALPH LAUREN
MAKEUP BEAUTY BAR

Fave moments with dad: My dad's very malambing and very maalaga. We used to go out of town with his tennis group from the village and after my yaya would give me a shower, I'd sit on his lap and he'd comb my wet hair. During another out-of-town trip, he helped me memorize 50 words and their meanings while we were on the road. I didn't know how to memorize so that's when I learned how to do it. He's also a math wizard (he got a final grade of 100 when he was in college) and he used to tutor me whenever I asked him to. I would get low grades in every other subject except math! I realized he was a terror when he was teaching in AIM, DLSU and ADMU, but I never felt it at all! So, I guess he was just different with me and my siblings.

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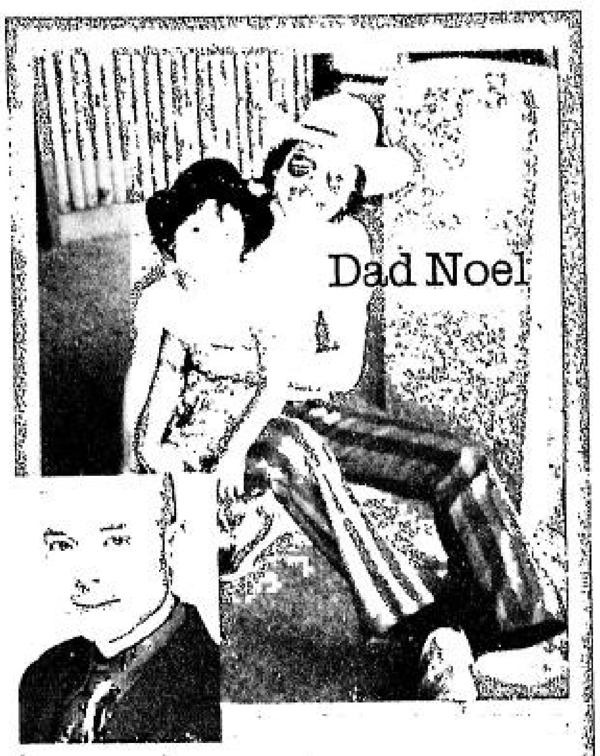
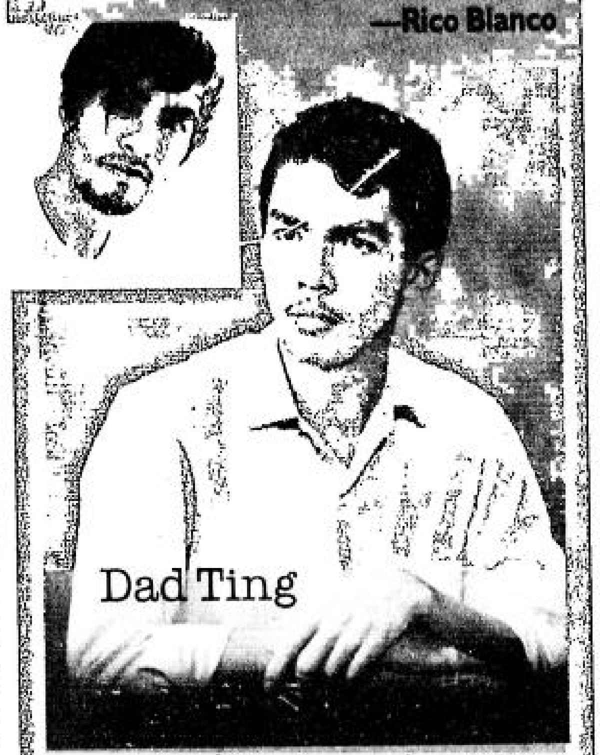


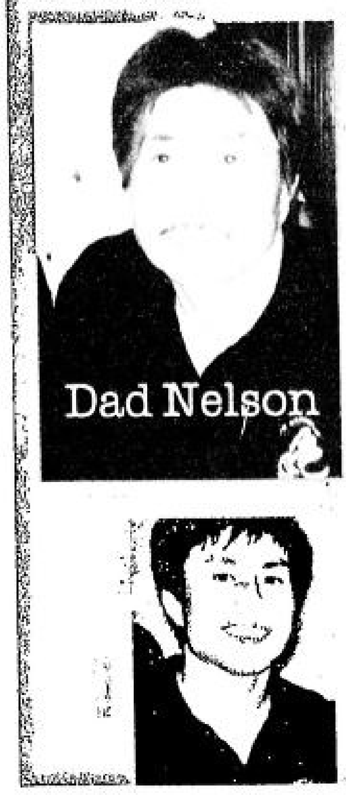
Happy Father's Day, Dad! I thank God for your love, your wisdom, and your inspiration, and also for the fact that you no longer dress like this.

—**Joel Trinidad**

You inspired me to dream big dreams, you showed me how to love selflessly, you taught me that greatness always comes with humility. Thanks, dad. You are my hero.

—**Rico Blanco**





Thanks, Dad, for showing me how to love a sport and how to work hard for it. Thanks for always being there and never giving up on me when times are hard. I love you. Happy Dad's day to the world's best dad and coach!

—**Kennevic Asuncion**

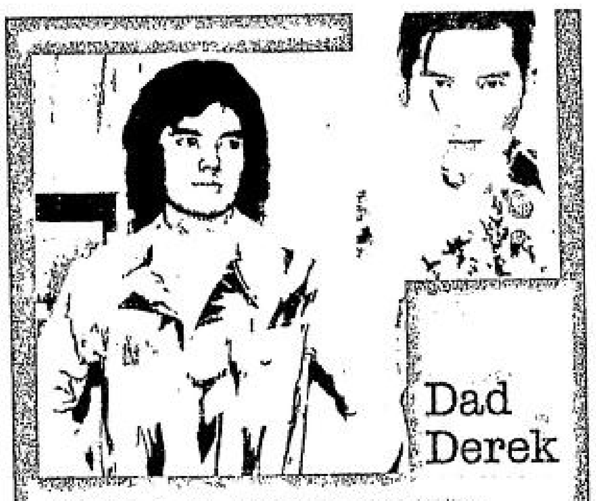
Father board

By Gem Padilla
Contributor

THEY SAY THAT BECOMING A FATHER IS A BLESSING from God. But that blessing feels like one only up until your kid decides to get a nose ring and drop out of school to join a rock band.

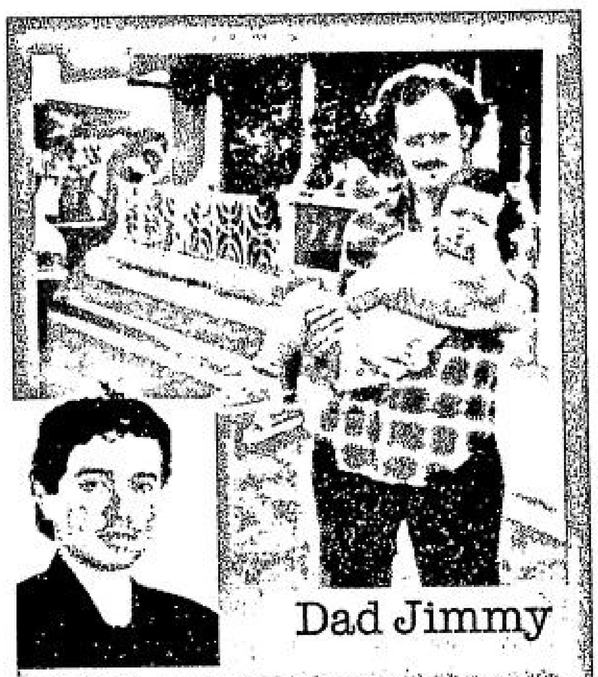
The point: Whether blessing or curse, fatherhood is not a temp job but a permanent one. That cute little bundle of joy will one day grow up and perhaps change his name to Nancy.

But so what? That's life and that's fatherhood. So to all you brave men out there who took a chance, thanks!



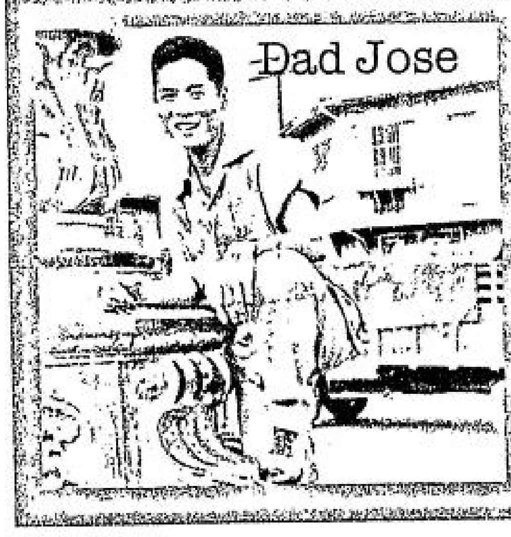
I wish we could spend more quality time together. Since you are embarking on a new field of creativity, I wish you good health and the determination to succeed.

—**Robby Carmona**



[illegible] you're not old. You have so many [illegible] new things to try and achieve. Take your vitamins and [illegible] I know I can always find you at [illegible] anyway. I constantly pray for you.

—**Minco Fabregas**



I lost my father a decade ago but for me, that is no reason not to celebrate special days or occasions... Thank you for all the love. I admire you for your principles, for setting a good example when we were growing up and for allowing me to pursue what I wanted in life. You will forever serve as my inspiration to continuously better myself and my work. I will make sure that I live up to your standards. I miss you dearly.

—**Joey Samson**

[illegible] with I-ON

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a portion of Coke Classic
a portion of I-ON Energy Drink
serve in a long clear glass with ice

I-ON Jolting Jelly
a portion of Vodka
a portion of I-ON Energy Drink
serve in Jello form with a cherry in the middle to give taste

I-ON Plunge Charge
a portion of San Mig Light Beer
a portion of I-ON Energy Drink
turn a big glass upside down with a Tequila shot glass inside when serving

I-ON Pick-Me-Up
a small portion of Grenadine
a portion of Sprite
a portion of I-ON Energy Drink
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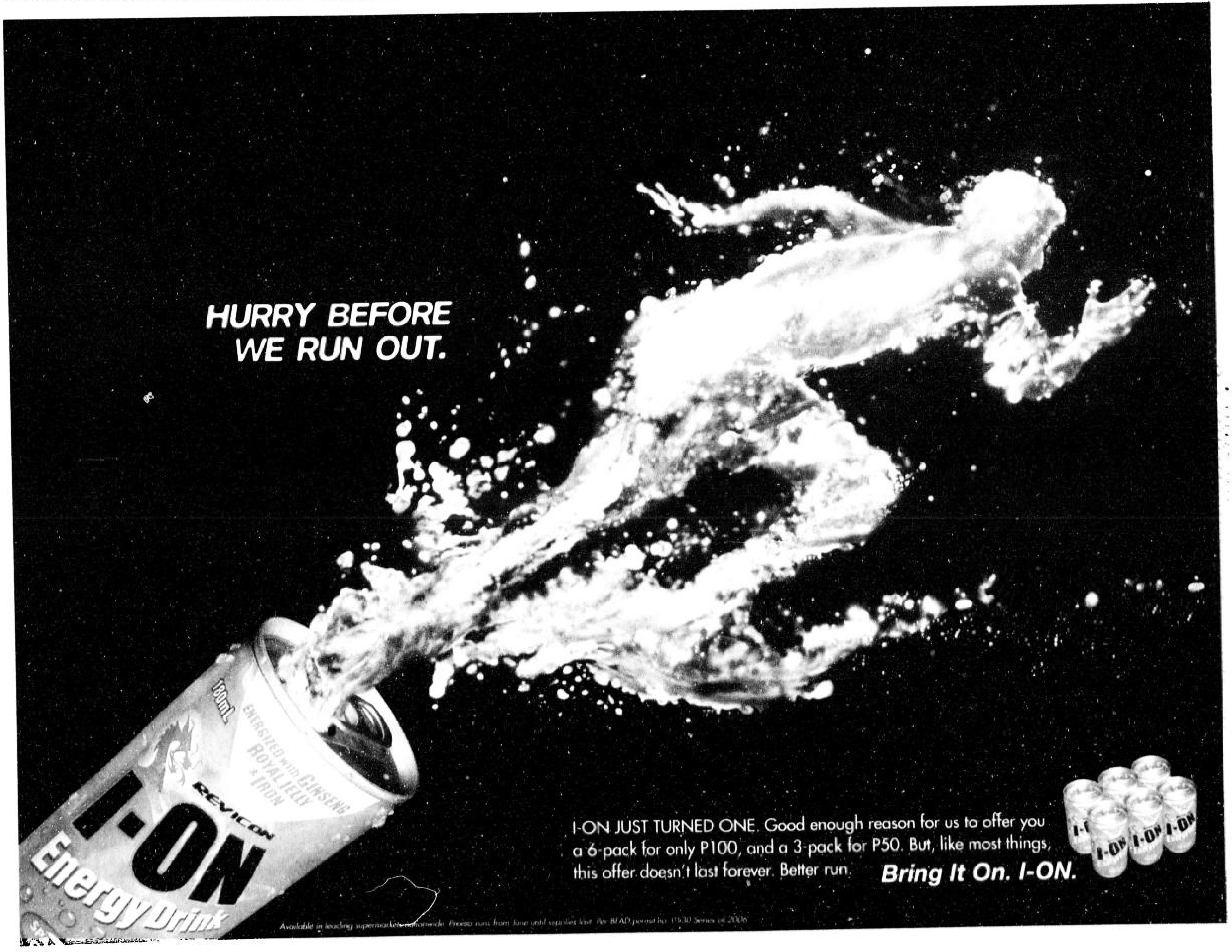

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WHAT'S NEXT?
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ETHAN HUNT is that you? The Timex version of "Mission Impossible"

Tic talk

Timex image model Piolo Pascual talks about his award-winning role as father to 9-year-old Iñigo

By Gem Padilla
Contributor

HIS DETERMINED admirers call him *Papa* Piolo, and he is the ultimate dreamboat in Philippine show business. He can be strong and masculine one moment, heartbreakingly vulnerable the next. His quiet demeanor is arresting both onscreen and in person.

Most show-biz personalities nowadays lack versatility, the common pitfall of being trapped into playing themselves as characters over and over again. Maybe it's luck or maybe it's skill, but Piolo has turned out to be an actor more than a star.

He has repeatedly challenged his range with roles in movies like "Dekada '70," "Milan" and "Lagarista." But his accomplishments as an actor, singer and model (on his fourth year now as the celebrity endorser for Timex watches) cannot rival his real-life performance as a hands-on dad to his son Iñigo.

Living in a paparazzi bubble is a celebrity parent's nightmare. For this 29-year-old movie star, raising a 9-year-old kid is not an easy task, and having a non-traditional family setup does not make it any easier.

"Fatherhood has definitely made me a more responsible person," says Piolo. "You have to be cautious with your actions. I have a son to think about and he asks questions."

As a consequence of their family structure (Piolo and the mother of his son do not live under the same roof, but are together in raising their son), Piolo has chosen to surround Iñigo with a support system. As a born-again Christian, he believes that a strong Christian community is vital in the upbringing of his child.

"I want him to have a strong faith in God. He knows what's good because of his religious background, and we try to surround him with people from our Church who can guide him."

Is he a strict dad? "What's good about my son is that he listens," says Piolo. "I don't spank my kid when he does something wrong. I talk to him man-to-man."

PIOLO with Timex leading lady Angel Locsin

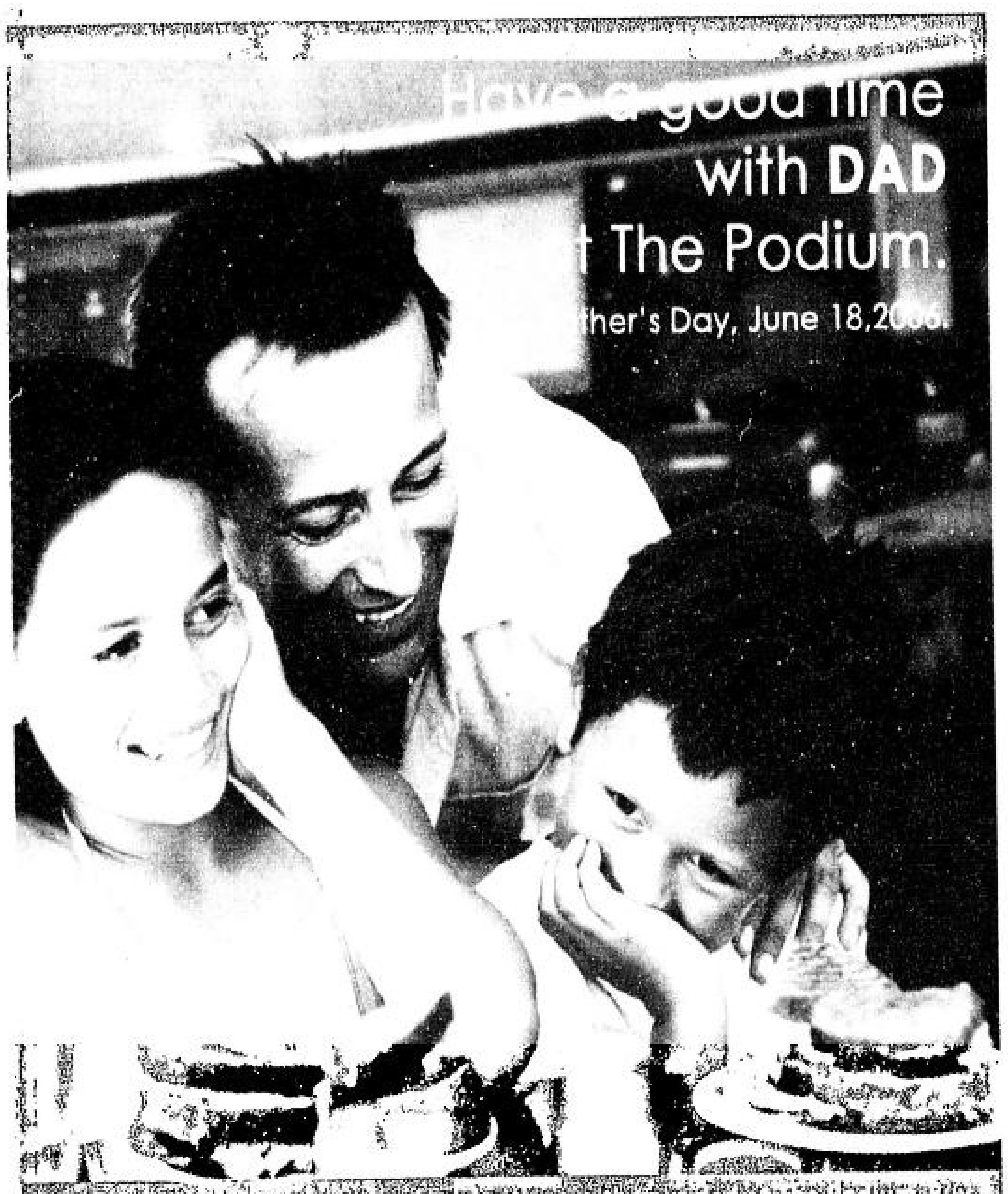
Despite his busy schedule, Piolo makes it a point to be actively involved in his son's life, even with humdrum parts like PTA meetings and such. Sundays are sacrosanct. They go to Church and spend the rest of the day in their favorite mall to watch a movie or go bowling. Just this summer Iñigo enrolled in piano, basketball and voice lessons.

"He's discovering things he wants to do and I encourage him. I'm a supportive dad and I want to be there always to cheer him on," says Piolo.

On the subject of Iñigo entering show business, the father's protective side comes out. He says that a good education is what he wants for his son.

"Several talent scouts have asked him already, but he never tells them that I'm his father. I told him *papataasin pa natin* market value *mo, anak ka yata* ni Piolo Pascual," he says, grinning.

Hmmm... Stage dad in the making? Only time will tell.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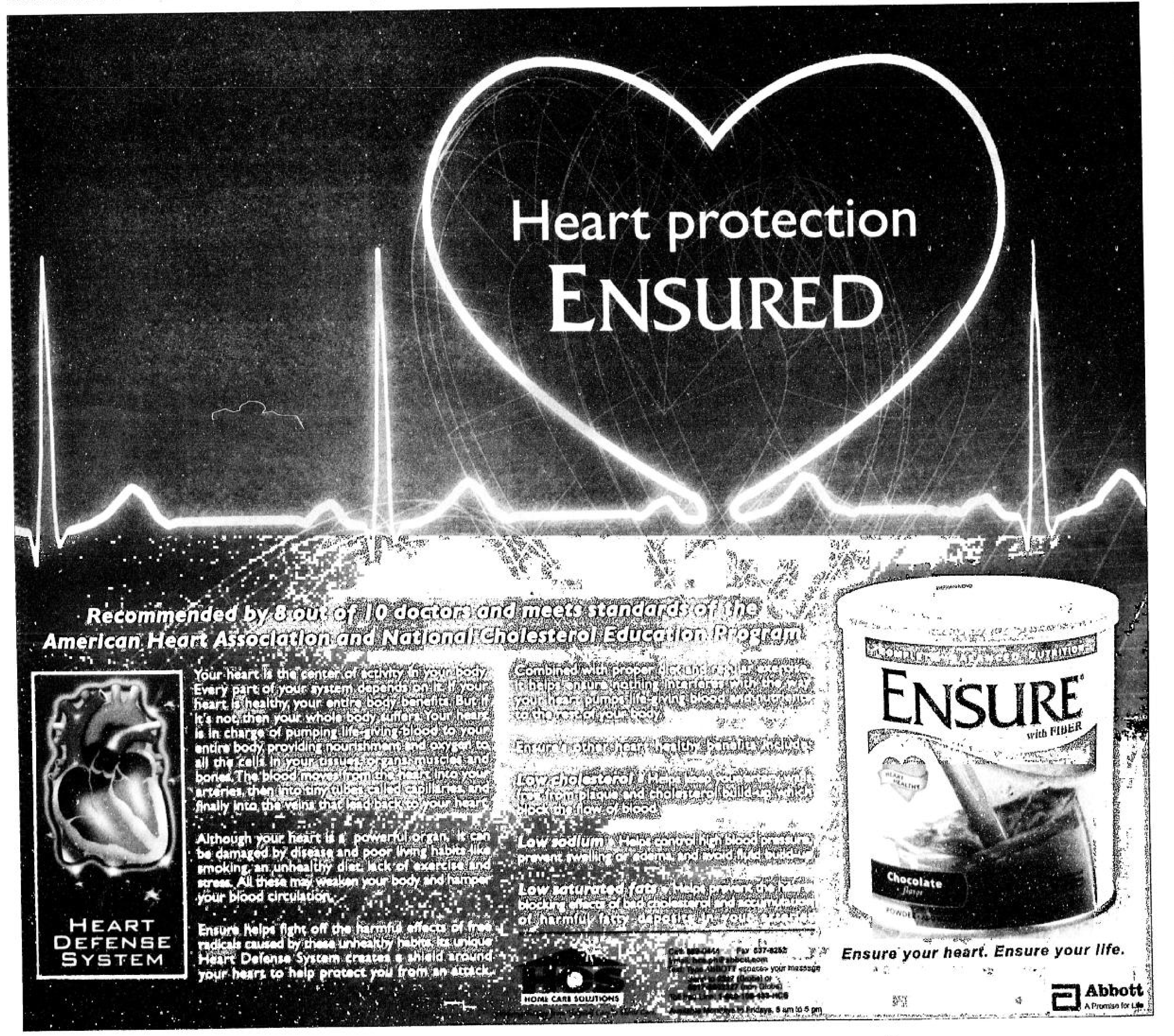

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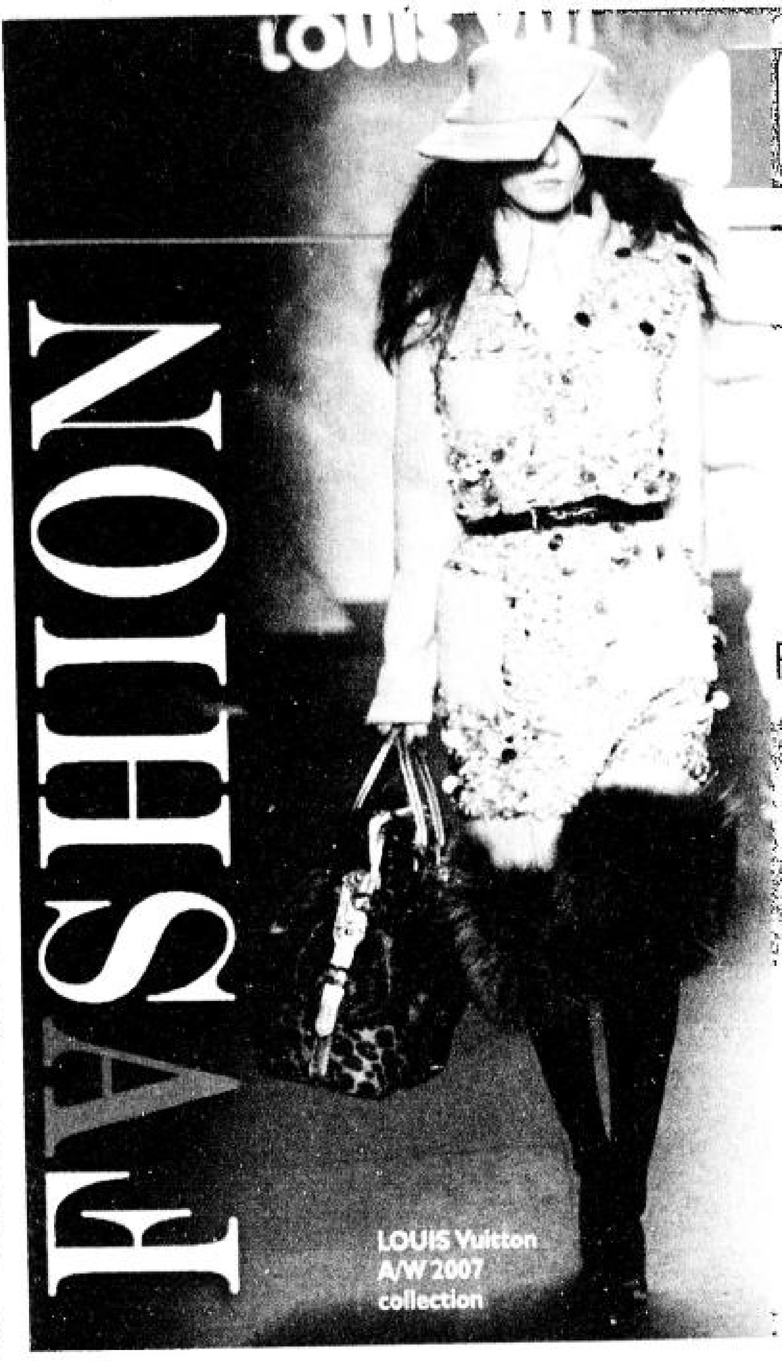


LOUIS Vuitton A/W 2007 collection

LoVe, okyo

JEWELRY designer Camille Miceli

MICELI'S Louisette ring

CHAIR and CEO of LVMH, Bernard Arnault

PRESIDENT of LVMH Yves Carcelle and LV Philippines brand manager Rhea De Vera

Forget animé, sushi, Zen, and (dare I say it) Paris for the moment. Tokyo turns *trés* chic, thanks to the immortal Louis Vuitton

MARC Jacobs and me at LV's after-show bash

By Jenni Epperson

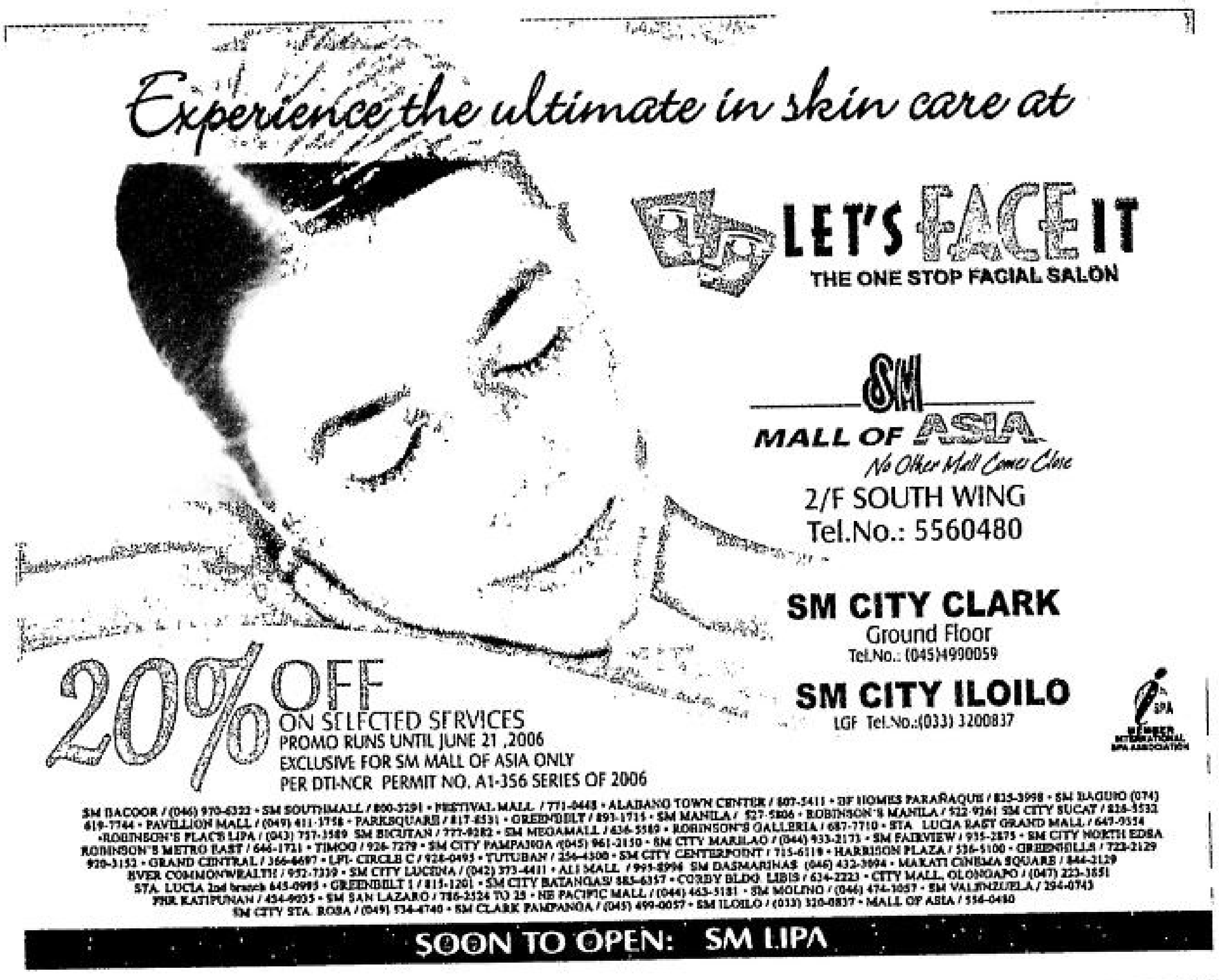
KONNICHIWA!

In the land of Takashi Murakami, maguro sashimi and Ganguro girls, I found myself in a bowing binge, rekindling the inner child in me and falling in love all over again with Marc Jacobs.

The Japanese are the most polite people I've ever encountered. They always greet you with a bow to show how much they respect you and one another.

Japan also has stores with the cutest finds, from colorful kicks and bags to quirky designs, many of which cater exclusively to the equally quirky Japanese market, and cannot

LOVE/ D2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June 18, Kiddie Fun Club's Activity with Sesame Street, 2/L, 4pm
June 23, 24 & 25, Traje, A Bridal Fair, 2/L, 10am
Tuesdays, Stand-up Comedy @ Cuba Libre, 2/L, 8pm
Fridays, Live Bands @ Cuba Libre, 2/L, 8pm

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June 24, Home Plus: Product Demo Exhibit, 3/L, 10am
June 30, Traje: A Bridal Fair, 3/L, 10am
Mondays, Live Bands @ Mark's Bar, 2/L, 6pm
Tuesdays & Fridays, Live Bands @ The Activity Area, 2/L, 6pm
Wednesdays, Nightlife Acoustics, 2/L, 6pm
Thursdays, Stand-up Comedy @ Mark's Bar, 2/L, 8pm

starmall LAS PIÑAS
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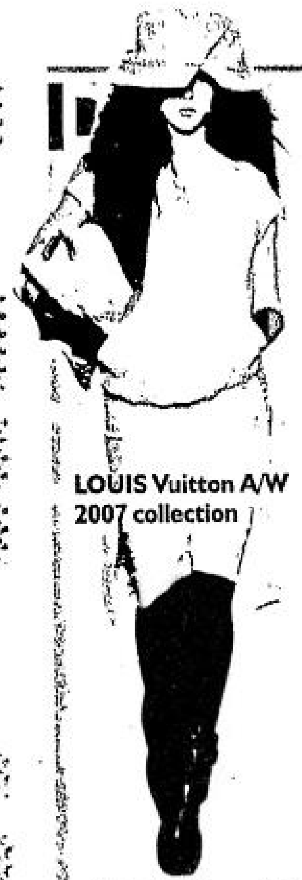
Mondays, Comedy Nights @ The Strip, 7pm
Tuesdays, Ballroom Nights @ Mark's Bar, 7pm
Wednesdays & Saturdays, Live Music @ The Strip, 7pm
Fridays, Acoustic Nights @ Mark's Bar, 8pm


LOUIS Vuitton A/W 2007 collection

the cool-ection the cool-ection the cool-ection the cool-ection the cool-ection the cool

COLD [illegible]

FUNNY pack

COOL coat

LUXE leather

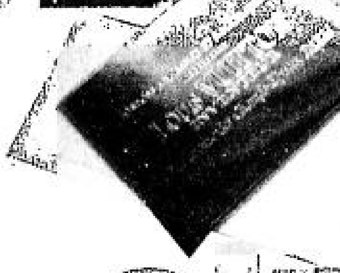
BLACK beauty

RED hot

LAYERED threads

SPOTT

LoVe, okyo



From page D1

be found anywhere else.

It is easy to understand why a super brand such as French luxury giant Louis Vuitton chose to hold its first-ever full show outside Paris in Japan. This is a nation that is certifiably couture-crazy. No price is too steep, and no design too progressive or outlandish for one of the world's top markets for luxury goods. Japan is every fashion house's wet dream. And for a catwalk-hungry chick like me, a fantasy come true.

The cool-ection

What began with (then) revolutionary flat trunks in 1854 has evolved into a fashion powerhouse, with Hollywood hotshots and catwalk goddesses (J. Lo, Naomi Campbell, Uma Thurman and Giselle Büdchen) becoming LV muses.

MARC "You Rock" Jacobs

When fashion's "it" boy Marc Jacobs became its creative director in 1997, introducing modern pop and kitsch into the brand's staid image, LV had nowhere to go but up and hip—with the likes of Sofia Coppola, Pharell Williams and Japan's King of Cool, Nigo, joining the fray.

In a makeshift dome-shaped tent at the Yumenoshima Park, east of the capital, in the presence of beautiful celebrities and models, Marc Jacobs recently unveiled the Louis Vuitton Autumn/Winter 2007 *prêt a porter* collection.

Who would've thought grunge could be cute? Leave it to Jacobs to do just that. He opened the show with a DJ mix of Sheena E.'s "The Glamorous Life," then long-haired models wearing oversized hats, fingerless gloves and ski boots strutted down the runway in layered threads and a cool attitude.

The catch phrases for next winter? Comfy chic and grunge glam. Think thick sweater dresses layered over cropped trousers, and wide-leg pan suits in putty, beige, gray and black paired with ski boots and Indian-like slippers. Looks that are sure to be seen on Tokyo's streets faster than you can make origami.

The collections colors were muted, but with a splash of red and leopard print—a tribute to Stephen Sprouse, who created the graffiti and abstract leopard print for LV in 2002. It was a revival that recalled Jacobs' Perry Ellis days, when he became known for a youthful, droll style that showed his devil-may-care use of color and voluminous silhouettes.

His recent collection still has a bit of his rebel romps, though toned down. With melancholic colors, pretty punk looks and disco-ball bags, he has turned everything our parents warned us about into lovable luxurious loot that even my mom will line up for.

As a Studio 54 groupie, and, now, collaborating with rapper and producer Pharell Williams, Jacobs shapes the collection to reflect his personality. His fondness for disco days and DJ dreams is most apparent in one standout accessory, a golden headphone-handle brag bag.

Yes, the highlight were still the bags, with '80s inspirations abounding in metallic details such as metallic Vernis and chain mail. Patent, silk and rubber as soft as butter mixed with other luxurious materials such as mink and alligator. The *menudier* handbag looked like a platinum brick in white gold—so luxurious that it's only made to order. Translation: only the rich, famous and totally insane can afford it!

After experimenting with voluminous materials in his A/W 2005 collection, Jacob's A/W 2007 is literally in full bloom with oversize hats, coats, skirts and bags.

Miceli in bloom

Speaking of bloom, the press and guests also got a sneak peek of Camille Miceli's latest jewelry collection for Louis Vuitton. Formerly public relations director for Chanel, Miceli was lured to LV where she created the first Fashion Press Office in 1997.

The Monogrammed Hoops, Camille's first design back in 2003, were so successful that Jacobs decided to involve her in all the productions and brought her into the studio with him.

In a short time, she became the Marc Jacobs muse and the jewelry designer for the Monogrammed Jewelry. Her latest brainchild, the Louisette line, is the female version of none other than Louis, *en français*.

Drawing inspiration from coquette, her *kikay amis* and her family, Miceli's line showcased floral designs in gold. The shapes were curvy and more organic, with stones of pink sapphire, rubies and diamonds individually set in a stem to create more luster.

Drool-worthy pieces included the pinky rings and stacked squarish bracelets. Her collection was about contrast. Some big pieces, like floral rings, necklaces and tiny pinky rings, could be stacked up to three pieces "to create your own bouquet," said Miceli.

Very Parisian and very chic—so "La Vie en Rose!"

Disco debauchery

There are two things I look forward to in a Louis Vuitton junket: the amazing fashion show, and the party! LV throws the most fun and lavish parties ever, with cool celebrities, overflowing champagne and awesome music.

The Tokyo grunge glam fashion show ended with Marc Jacobs taking a bow and turning his back to join his models. Then, like Ali Baba's cave, the walls opened and it was time to party!

Guests were ushered to a deca dance floor a la "Boogie Nights," with cute Japanese dancers in "Let's Get Physical" attire dancing on roller skates, no less! Everyone danced to the cool DJ mixes underneath a gargantuan mirror ball (to date, the biggest one I've seen). And to top off the disco theme, out came Grace Jones singing in French.

Partying the night away were the usual suspects from LV: LV chair Bernard Arnault, LV president Yves Carcelle, cool Camille Miceli and Marc "You Rock" Jacobs.

Team Philippines, decked out in our finest and ready to party hard, included LV Philippines brand manager Rhea De Vera, Preview magazine editor-in-chief Pauline Juan, Mega magazine editor-in-chief Carla Sibal, Y Style's Celine Lopez and your Mabuhay! girl, *moi*.

The coolest part of the night was the fact that Marc Jacobs sat at the "commoners' area"—Team Philippines' couch (be still, my beating heart!), with Nigo a couch away. When someone asked if Bathing Ape designer Nigo wanted to be in the VIP area, he said "No!" Very cool!

The Vogue Australia press said they looked forward to our "outfits" everyday, and proud Rhea De Vera seconded that she had the best-dressed press people.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again. We may be a Third World country, but we can look as cool as Sophia, or at least, we try. Pinoys rock!

Murakami, Marc and me

It's obvious by now that I am a Marc Jacobs fan. As in, I. Heart. Marc Jacobs. In my dream book, I wrote, "Meet designer Marc Jacobs," and now it has come true. On top of that, we hung out the whole night—well, more of we sat next to each other!

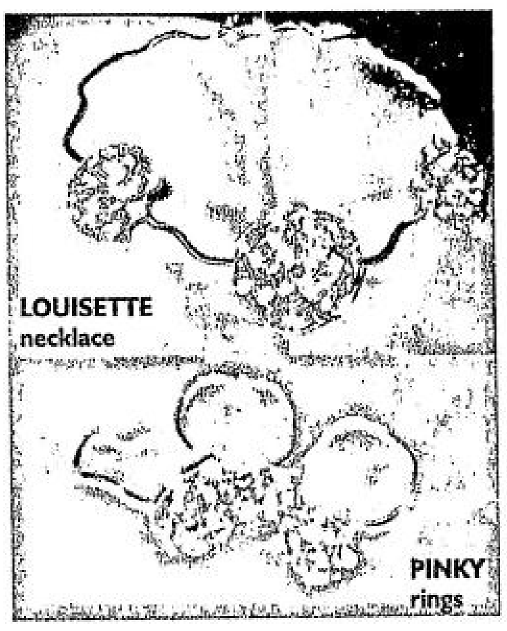
His Murakami collection, to me, was the bomb. How to make a classic brand look hip? Print graffiti and cartoonish designs like cherries and pink flowers with faces on it. And *voila*, the bag is now a collector's item.

Like a giddy fan, I asked Mr. Takashi Murakami to sign my LV Murakami pouchette, and he did, with matching drawing.

Judging from his latest collection, Marc Jacobs seems to be in a happy place. Ergo, so is the brand Louis Vuitton. He recently signed another 10-year contract with LV. So here's to 10 more years of fabulous fashion! *Trés magnifique!*

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

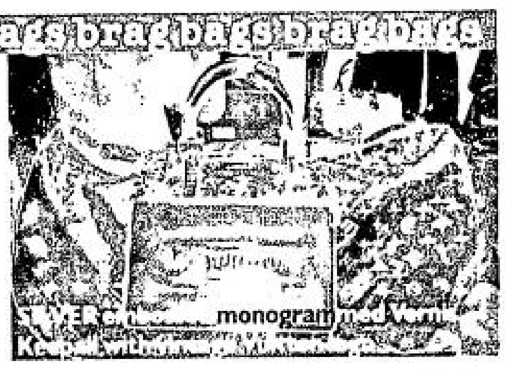
HEAVENLY HEADPHONES. The ultimate must-line-up-for bag


LOUISETTE necklace

PINKY rings

DIG FOR GOLD. Embossed monogrammed Vernis Alma and Papillon

LEOPARD-PRINT chain-mail messenger bag


SILVER [illegible] monogrammed Vernis [illegible]

VUITTON beaded bag

SILVER Vernis Alma

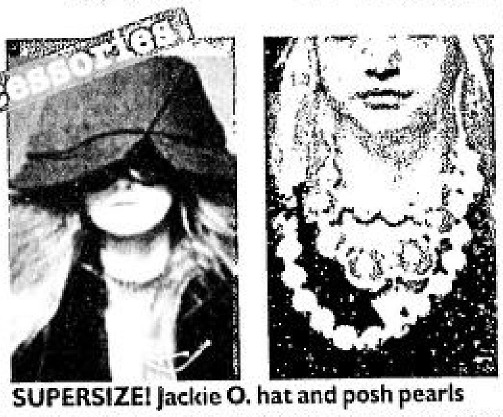
MURAKAMI mink messenger

show-off shoes show-off shoes show-off shoes show-off

MUST-HAVE aerodynamic shoes

awesome accessories awesome accessories

BINDI sunglasses


SUPERSIZE! Jackie O. hat and posh pearls

IT'S A DISCO WORLD! Giant mirror ball glitters

"TEAM PHILIPPINES." The author, Carla Sibal, Rhea De Vera, Pauline Juan and Celine Lopez

BATHING Ape designer Nigo

MISS Grace Jones

MURAKAMI signing the author's bag

WELCOME TO THE PLEASURE DOME. Fashion show and party venue at Yumenoshima Park

Playhound

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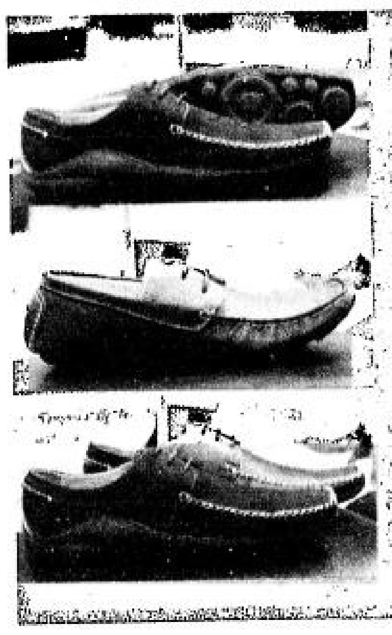

Traffic

Show your true metrosexual colors with stuff from Traffic, which offers a mix of chic, practical and, best of all, affordable footwear for men.

Formal and casual shoes—from moccasins to sneakers—inspired by the latest European and Japanese designs cost from P2,999-P7,299 a pair. It also carries stylish leather sandals, flip-flops and slides, with prices starting at P1,999 a pair.

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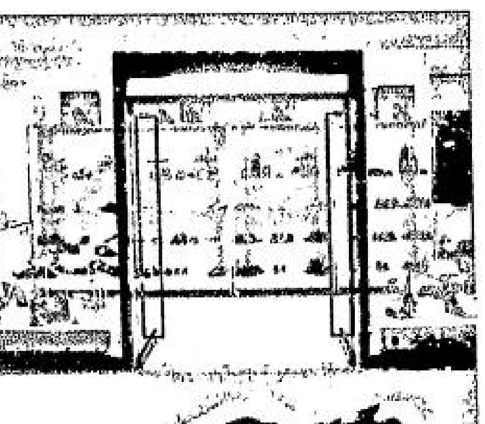
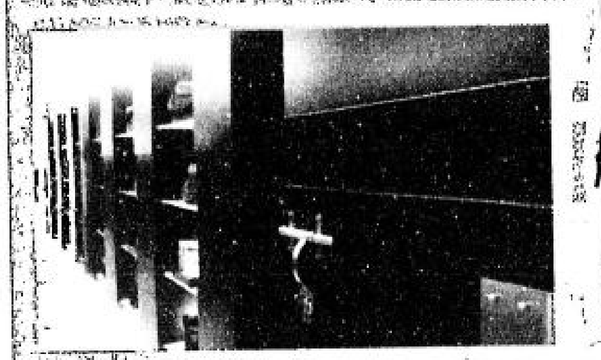


Man haunt

From page D4



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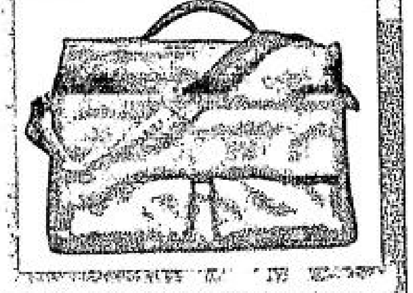
Carbon's bags, from envelope-type to carry-ons, duffels and satchels, are smart, streamlined and meant for the young. The same design sensibilities are also present in its fashion-forward leather shoes.



Merger

Who says a three-buttoned suit must come with real buttons? At Merger, ready-to-wear suits come with the most unusual closures—from metal clips to shiny hooks—and trimmings.

Of course, Merger also offers more conventional stuff for conservative guys. In fact, the brand aims to provide trendy young men with a wide range of suits and jackets for various occasions.

Merger, with branches at Glorietta 3 and SM Megamall, taps talents from Manila and Hong Kong to design its merchandise. Production is done in China.

BPI SAVE UP MOVE UP!
Save Up with BPI and Upgrade your Lifestyle

A lifestyle upgrade is an exciting prospect for many of us. After all, who wouldn't want to drive home a brand new luxury car, move to a more upscale neighborhood or simply have more cash at one's disposal? Now, Bank of the Philippine Islands lets you upgrade your lifestyle, whatever stage in life you are in—whether you're just starting out, somewhat successful or already accomplished. Get a chance to move up in life when you join BPI SAVE UP, MOVE UP promo.

The promo is open to all peso and foreign currency individual account holders who open or maintain Savings, Checking or Time Deposit Accounts with BPI, BPI Family Savings Bank or BPI Direct Savings Bank. Every P5,000 in savings or checking or P25,000 in a time deposit entitles a depositor to get one (1) electronic raffle coupon. The more you save, the more chances of winning.

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But that's not all. On top of BPI SAVE UP, MOVE UP's exciting raffle, a depositor is also entitled to get a BPI Electronic Gift Card worth P1,000 for every P300,000 new or additional deposit in savings or checking. The gift card comes in the form of a BPI Express Cash Card which can be used for shopping in 45,000 MasterCard Electronic establishments nationwide.

So start saving with BPI today! Who knows, you could be in for a fabulous lifestyle upgrade!

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Double your deposit balance by as much as ₱500,000.

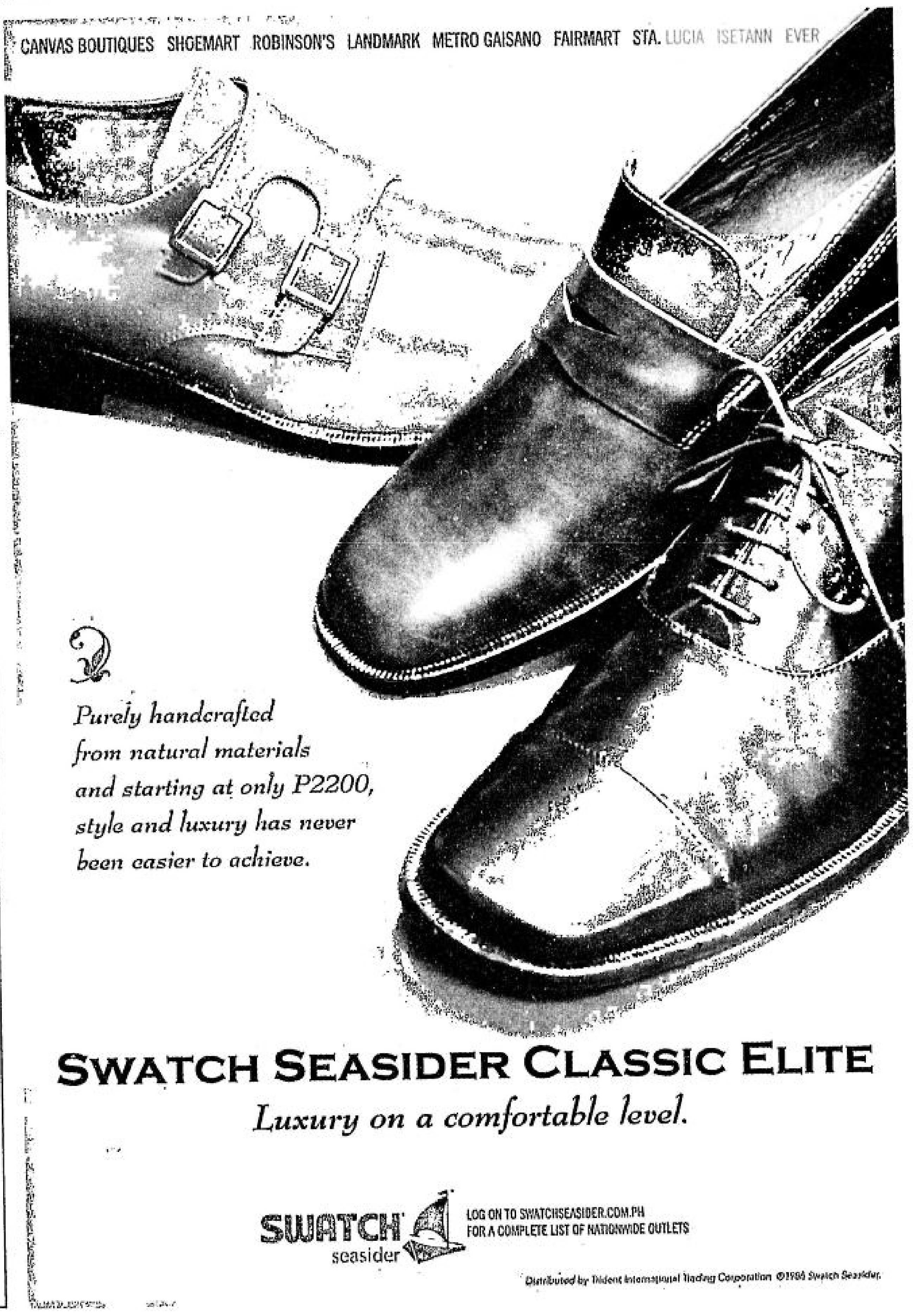
2ND DRAW:
Drive home a stylish Volvo V50.
VOLVO for life

3RD DRAW
Own a posh studio unit in The Columns Ayala Avenue.
THE COLUMNS

Visit any BPI, BPI Family Savings Bank branch or Express Banking Center. You may also call 89-100 or log on to www.bpiexpressonline.com

Promo period: March 1 to September 30, 2006. See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0420 Series of 2006

BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK
BPI DIRECT Savings Bank



CANVAS BOUTIQUES SHOEMART ROBINSON'S LANDMARK METRO GAISANO FAIRMART STA. LUCIA ISETANN EVER

Purely handcrafted from natural materials and starting at only P2200, style and luxury has never been easier to achieve.

SWATCH SEASIDER CLASSIC ELITE

Luxury on a comfortable level.

SWATCH seasider

LOG ON TO SWATCHSEASIDER.COM.PH
FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF NATIONWIDE OUTLETS

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Robinsons Supermarket

Get a chance to
WIN MONTHLY
in cooperation with Nestlé
One of 12 TOYOTA VIOS
and OTHER EXCITING HOME APPLIANCES!
February 1, 2006- January 31, 2007

Every P500 single receipt purchase inclusive of P150 selected Nestlé products = 1 raffle ticket.

TAKE A SHOT at WINNING INSTANT PRIZES upon completion of the purchase requirement

SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION COLGATE-PALMOLIVE P&G Unilever Nestlé

3rd PRIZE
72 SHARP 6.4 cu ft REFRIGERATORS
(6 Winners per month)

2nd PRIZE
36 LA GERMANIA GAS RANGES
(3 Winners per month)

*Color may vary from actual prize.
See flyers and posters for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit #0543, Series of 2006

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Man haunt

From page D4

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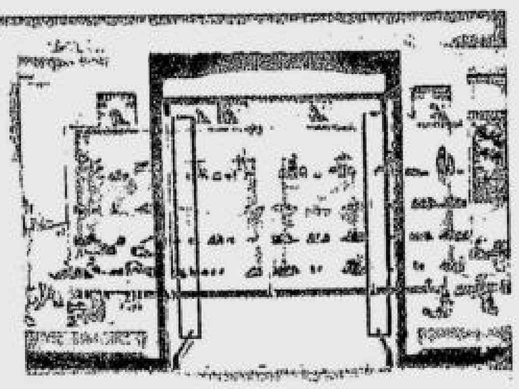
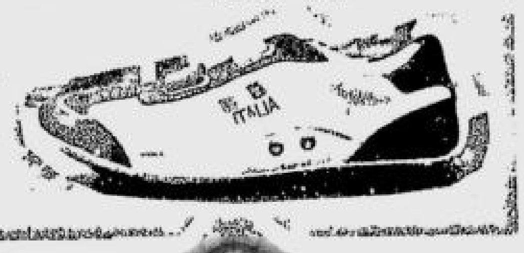

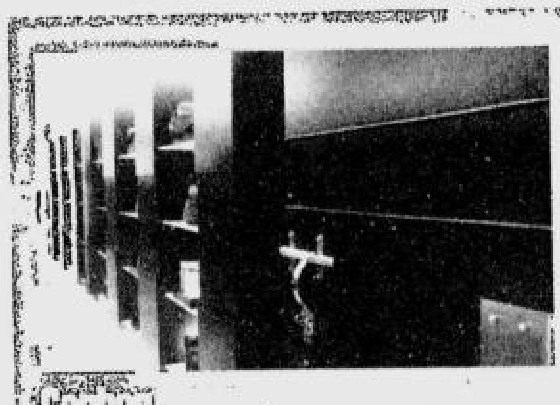

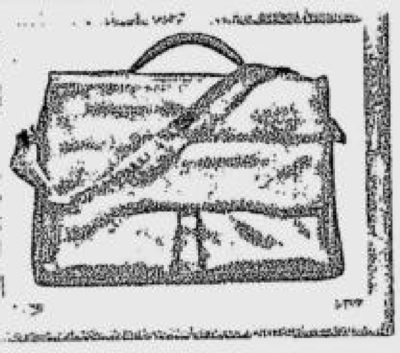

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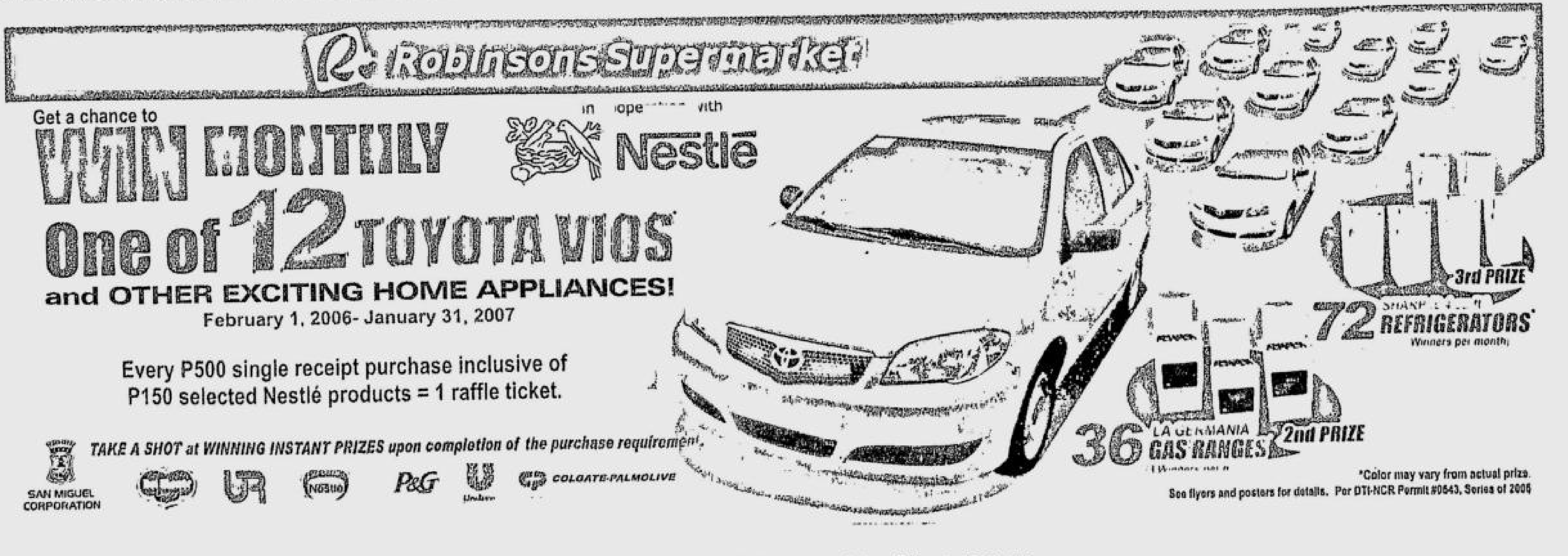
Pro [illegible] period March [illegible] September 30, 2006. See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR [illegible]

BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK
BPI DIRECT



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Winners per month

36 LA GERMANIA GAS RANGES
2nd PRIZE

*Color may vary from actual prize.
See flyers and posters for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit #0643, Series of 2006

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Homme et Femme

Known for carrying such high-end foreign brands as Marni, Balenciaga, Christian Dior and Fred Perry, Homme et Femme is perhaps the most unlikely place to go to for sports apparel.

But it happens to be the only store in the country which sells Y-3 stuff, from rubbers shoes, sports bags to athletic apparel. The line, of course, is a collaboration between Japanese designer Yohji Yamamoto and Adidas.

t femme
end of season sale

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LET OUR TECHNOLOGY MOVE YOU.

Capture still photos and record videos simultaneously with Photo DV.

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• 20x Optical Zoom

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ZR100
• 680 000 pixels
• 20x Optical Zoom

ZR400
• 1.33 megapixel CCD
• 14x Optical Zoom

NEW ZR500
• 680 000 pixels
• 25x Optical Zoom

NEW ZR600
• 680 000 pixels
• 25x Optical Zoom

NEW ZR700
• 680 000 pixels
• 25x Optical Zoom

OPTURA 50
• 2.2 megapixels
• 10x Optical Zoom

OPTURA 60
• 2.2 megapixels
• 14x Optical Zoom

OPTURA 600
• 4.3 megapixels
• 10x Optical Zoom

OPTURA S1
• 2.2 megapixels
• 10x Optical Zoom

Insist on an original warranty issued by Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc.

Promo Period: April 16 to June 30, 2006. Per DTI-NCR Permit No.2449 Series of 2006.

Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc. 2F Marvin Plaza, 2153 Don Chino Roces Avenue cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City
Tels.: 884-9000 • Fax: 810-9797 • info@canon.com.ph • www.canon.com.ph

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Man haunt

Make Dad happy with men's shops that offer stylish choices

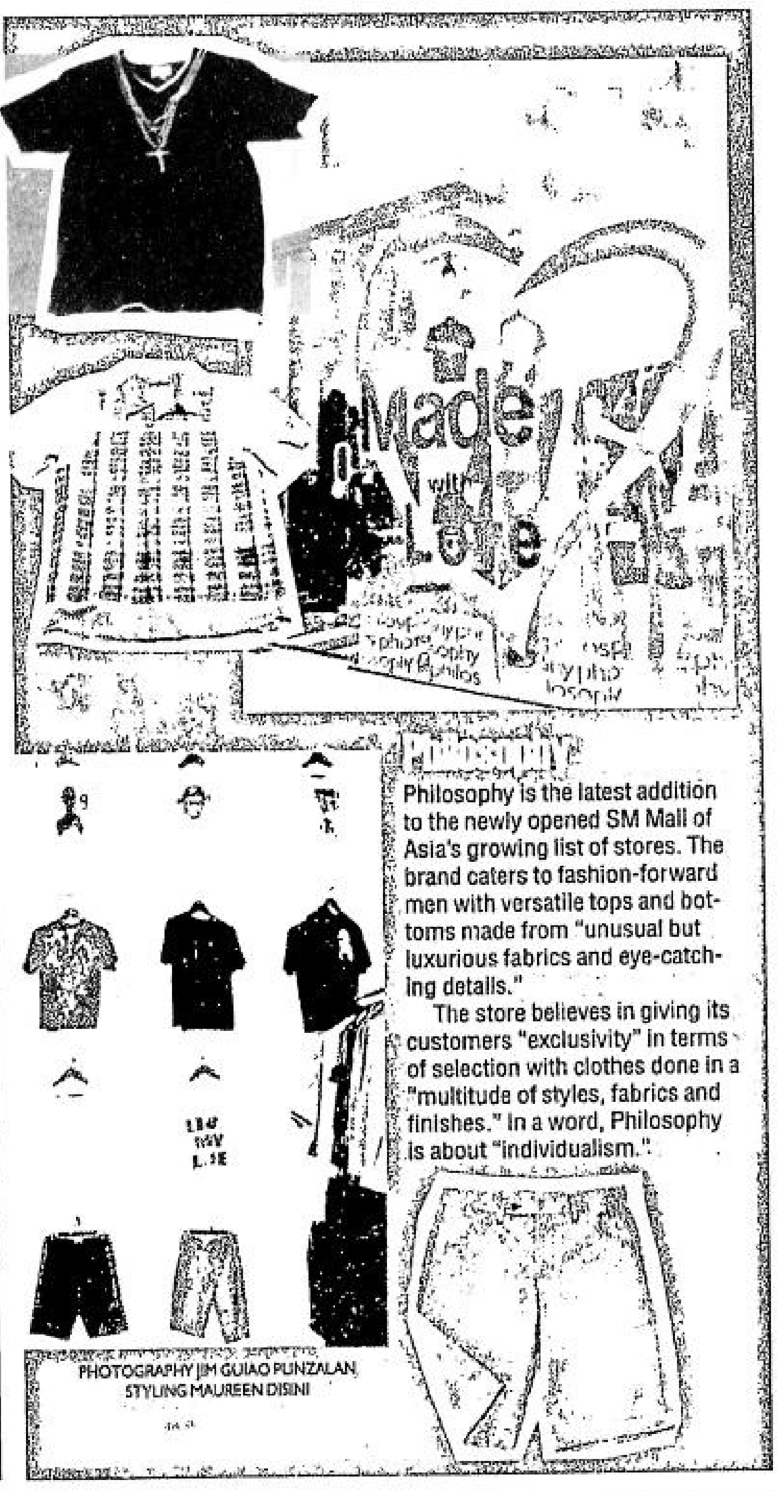
By Alex Y. Vergara

FATHER'S DAY IS A mere two days away. In case you haven't found the perfect gift for the man in your life, INQUIRER Fashion scoured Metro Manila in search of wearable as well as distinctive shoes and articles of clothing for "Daddy."

A number of stores featured in this story are no longer new. But by keeping a low profile, they've managed to stay fresh and exciting all these years. And by virtue of the unique range of men's stuff they carry, they've become the city's best-kept secrets.

Of course, as far as fashion-forward men are concerned, secrets don't exist. But if your dad or hubby is a regular guy, chances are he has yet to see what's available in these stores. Why don't you do him a favor by checking them out?

MAN HAUNT/ D3



Philosophy

Philosophy is the latest addition to the newly opened SM Mall of Asia's growing list of stores. The brand caters to fashion-forward men with versatile tops and bottoms made from "unusual but luxurious fabrics and eye-catching details."

The store believes in giving its customers "exclusivity" in terms of selection with clothes done in a "multitude of styles, fabrics and finishes." In a word, Philosophy is about "individualism."

PHOTOGRAPHY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN, STYLING MAUREEN DISINI

NEW ARRIVALS
Now Open: Mall of Asia

U2
Urban Living

Shangri-La Plaza . Glorietta 3 . Alabang Town Center . Gateway Mall . Robinsons Ermita . Robinsons Galleria . Robinsons Metro East . SM North Edsa . SM Sta. Mesa . SM Baguio . Harrison Plaza . Inside Cinderella: Glorietta 3, SM Megamall, V-Mall Greenhills, Festival Mall

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Contributing editor
Ria Francisco-Prieto

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Text us your feedback:
Inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

BEAUTY

Everyday pretty!

Anna Palabyab

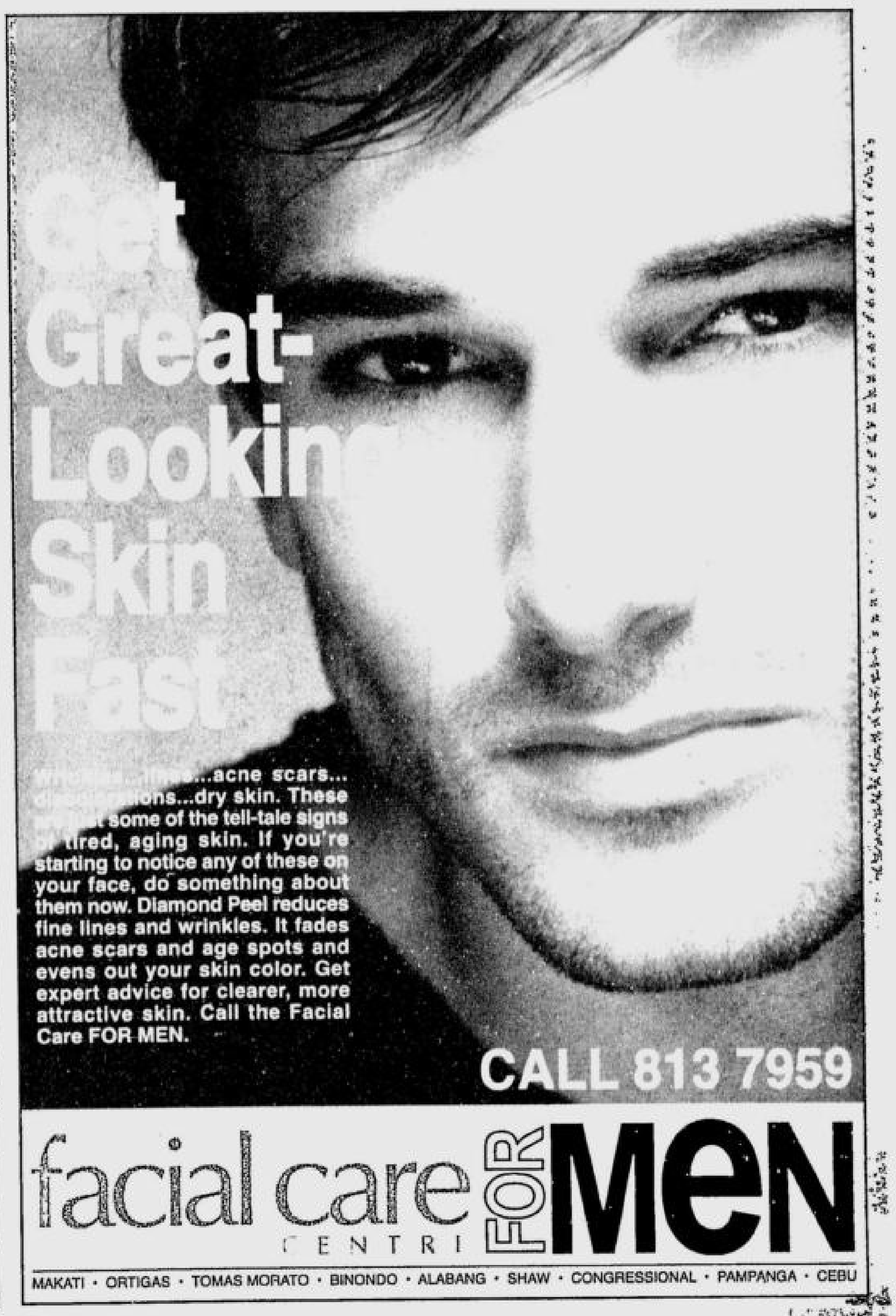
- doctor

Makeup used:
- Face: Ideal Balance T-zone Pressed Powder Natural Beige, Blush Delice True Rose
- Lips: Colour Juice Lip Gloss Strawberry
- Eyes: Contour Resist Eyeliner Brown, Lash Architect Mascara Brown

For hair:
- Feria Marron Glace, Studio Line Smooth Perfect

Skin care:
- Hydrafresh Eye (anti-fatigue and dark circles)
- Pure Zone Anti-Imperfection Moisturizer (great makeup base and perfect to prevent imperfections and oiliness)

HAIR AND MAKEUP: JIGS MAYUGA
PHOTOS: PAOLO PINEDA
STYLING: KAT SY



Get Great-Looking Skin Fast

wrinkles...lines...acne scars... discolorations...dry skin. These [illegible] some of the tell-tale signs [illegible] tired, aging skin. If you're starting to notice any of these on your face, do something about them now. Diamond Peel reduces fine lines and wrinkles. It fades acne scars and age spots and evens out your skin color. Get expert advice for clearer, more attractive skin. Call the Facial Care FOR MEN.

CALL 813 7959

facial care CENTRE FOR MEN

MAKATI · ORTIGAS · TOMAS MORATO · BINONDO · ALABANG · SHAW · CONGRESSIONAL · PAMPANGA · CEBU

Ayala Malls

Sale! Sale!

June 16 - 18 10am - 10pm

Home Market!
Covered Parking
Technology Market!
Fiesta Market!
Fountain Area
Gift Market!
Street Market!
JAB FAIR
Fashion Market!
Motor Market!
Playzone
KALAYAAN-BUENDIA FLY-OVER
KALAYAAN
KALAYAAN C-5 INTERSECTION
PRICE SMART
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
FROM PASIG
C-5
32ND STREET
THE FORT
34TH STREET
EDSA
AYALA AVE.
SHELL STATION
FROM SOUTH SUPER HIGHWAY

Find your way to the best deals.

Erik Santos Album Launch	4th Manila Jazz Festival	Johnson & Johnson Top to Toe for Moms to Know	The 1st JAB Fair @ the AYALA MALLS	Great Finds, Great Perks Promo
June 11 Activity Center	June 16 Central Plaza	June 17 & 18 Central Plaza	June 16 - 18 Activity Center	April 3 - June 30 Get discounts or freebies plus the chance to win P10,000 worth of Ayala Malls electronic gift certificates! See coupons for more details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-174, Series of 2006.

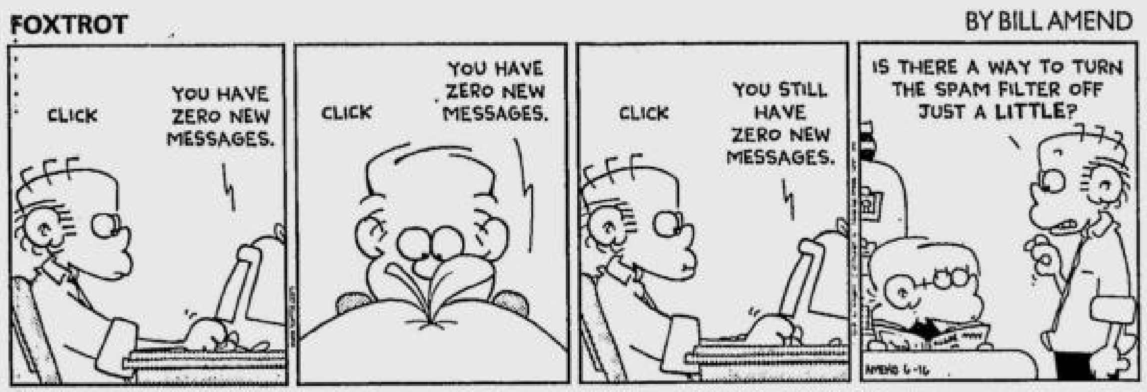
MARKET! MARKET! Bonifacio Global City

Market! Market! is in Bonifacio Global City. For inquiries, call Customer Service Hotline at 886-7519.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-237, Series of 2006.

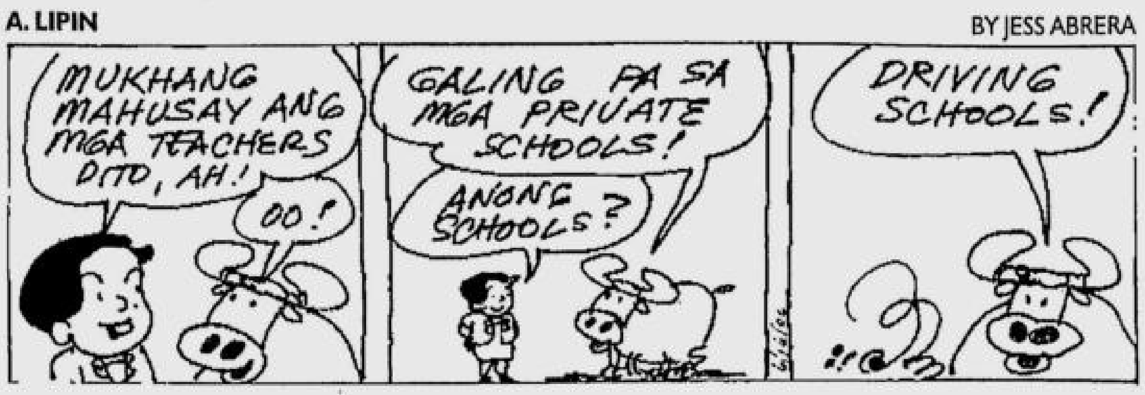
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


CLICK
YOU HAVE ZERO NEW MESSAGES.
CLICK
YOU HAVE ZERO NEW MESSAGES.
CLICK
YOU STILL HAVE ZERO NEW MESSAGES.
IS THERE A WAY TO TURN THE SPAM FILTER OFF JUST A LITTLE?

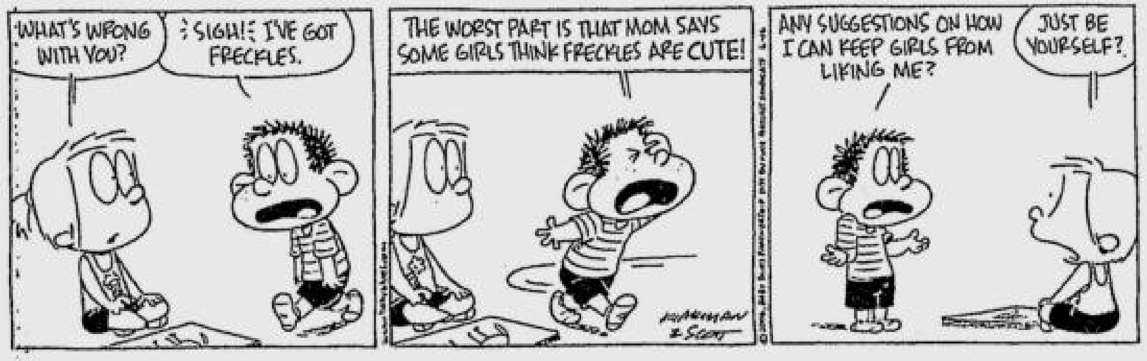
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MUKHANG MAHUSAY ANG MGA TEACHERS DITO, AH!
OO!
GALING PA SA MGA PRIVATE SCHOOLS!
ANONG SCHOOLS?
DRIVING SCHOOLS!

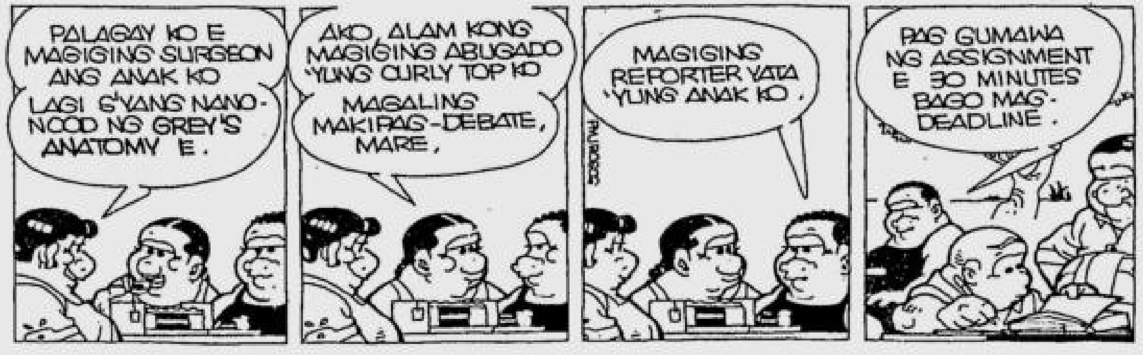
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
SIGH! I'VE GOT FRECKLES.
THE WORST PART IS THAT MOM SAYS SOME GIRLS THINK FRECKLES ARE CUTE!
ANY SUGGESTIONS ON HOW I CAN KEEP GIRLS FROM LIKING ME?
JUST BE YOURSELF?

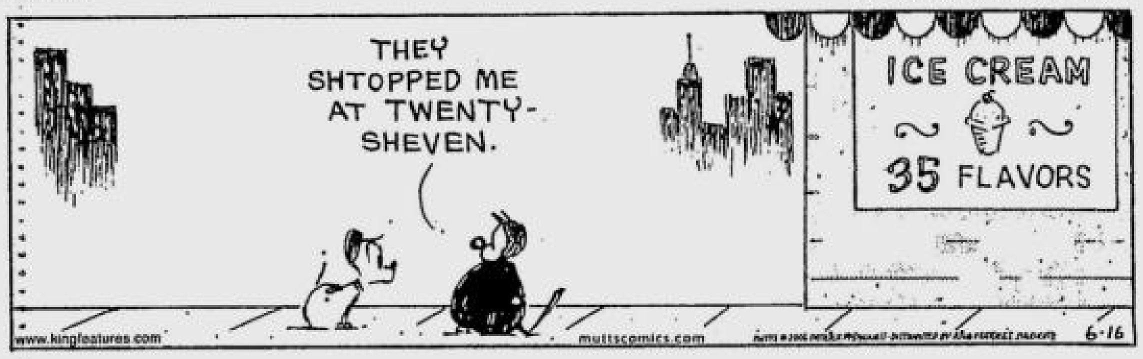
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PALAGAY KO E MAGIGING SURGEON ANG ANAK KO
LAGI G'YANG NANONOOD NG GREY'S ANATOMY E.
AKO, ALAM KONG MAGIGING ABUGADO 'YUNG CURLY TOP KO
MAGALING MAKIPAG-DEBATE, MARE.
MAGIGING REPORTER YATA 'YUNG ANAK KO.
PAG GUMAWA NG ASSIGNMENT E 30 MINUTES BAGO MAG-DEADLINE.

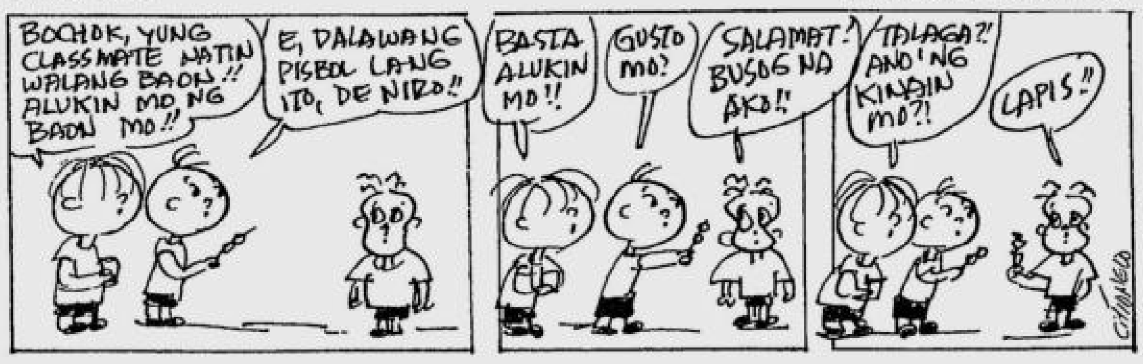
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THEY SHTOPPED ME AT TWENTY-SHEVEN.
ICE CREAM
35 FLAVORS
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com
6-16

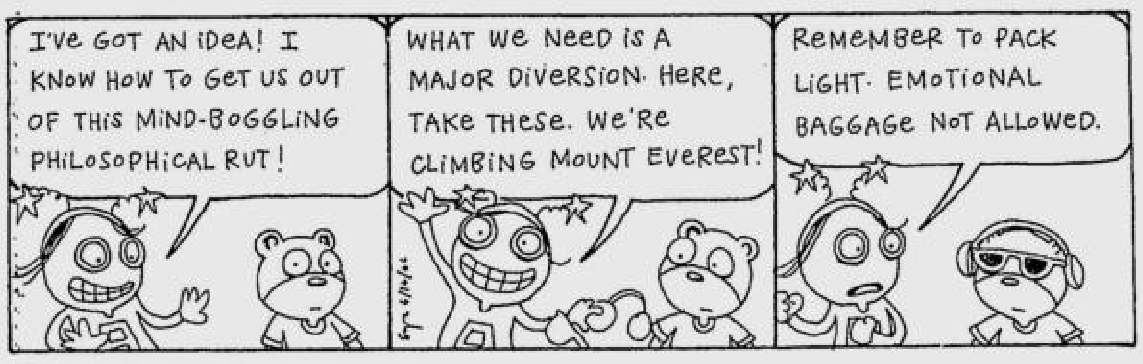
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BOCHOK, YUNG CLASSMATE NATIN WALANG BAON!! ALUKIN MO NG BAON MO!!
E, DALAWANG PISBOL LANG ITO, DE NIRO!!
BASTA ALUKIN MO!!
GUSTO MO?
SALAMAT! BUSOG NA AKO!!
TALAGA?! ANO'NG KINAIN MO?!
LAPIS!!

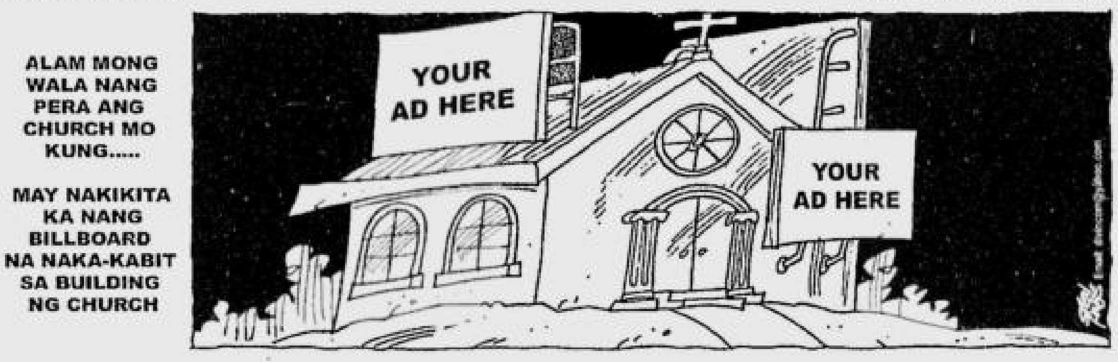
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I'VE GOT AN IDEA! I KNOW HOW TO GET US OUT OF THIS MIND-BOGGLING PHILOSOPHICAL RUT!
WHAT WE NEED IS A MAJOR DIVERSION. HERE, TAKE THESE. WE'RE CLIMBING MOUNT EVEREST!
REMEMBER TO PACK LIGHT. EMOTIONAL BAGGAGE NOT ALLOWED.

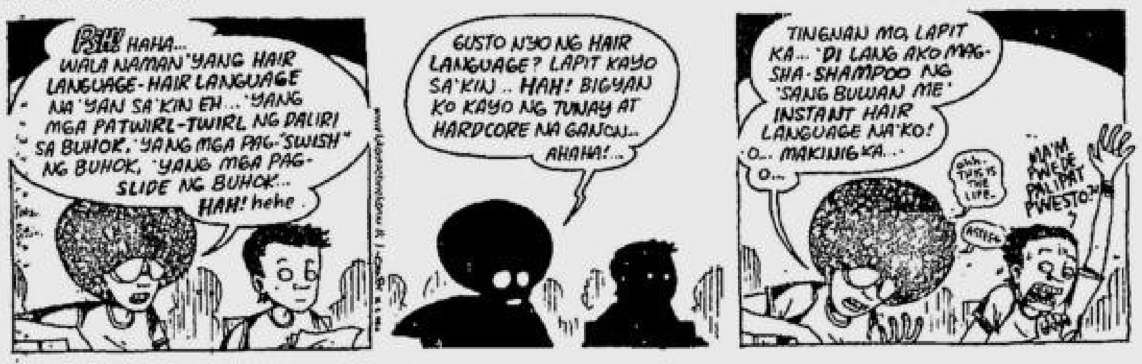
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ALAM MONG WALA NANG PERA ANG CHURCH MO KUNG.....
MAY NAKIKITA KA NANG BILLBOARD NA NAKA-KABIT SA BUILDING NG CHURCH
YOUR AD HERE
YOUR AD HERE

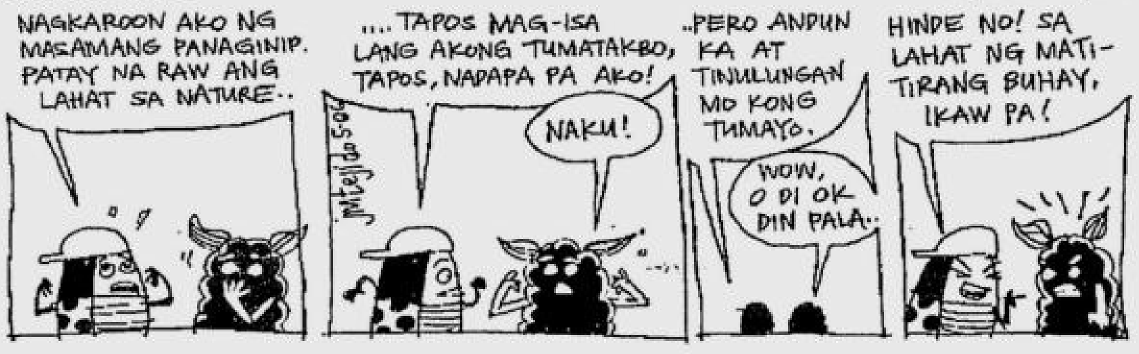
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


PSH! HAHA... WALA NAMAN 'YANG HAIR LANGUAGE-HAIR LANGUAGE NA 'YAN SA'KIN EH... 'YANG MGA PATWIRL-TWIRL NG DALIRI SA BUHOK, 'YANG MGA PAG-"SWISH" NG BUHOK, 'YANG MGA PAG-SLIDE NG BUHOK... HAH! hehe
GUSTO N'YO NG HAIR LANGUAGE? LAPIT KAYO SA'KIN.. HAH! BIGYAN KO KAYO NG TUNAY AT HARDCORE NA GANCON... AHAHA!...
TINGNAN MO, LAPIT KA... 'DI LANG AKO MAG-SHA-SHAMPOO NG 'SANG BUWAN ME' INSTANT HAIR LANGUAGE NA'KO! O... MAKINIG KA...
O...
AHH... THIS IS THE LIFE.
MA'M PWEDE PALIPAT PWESTO?!

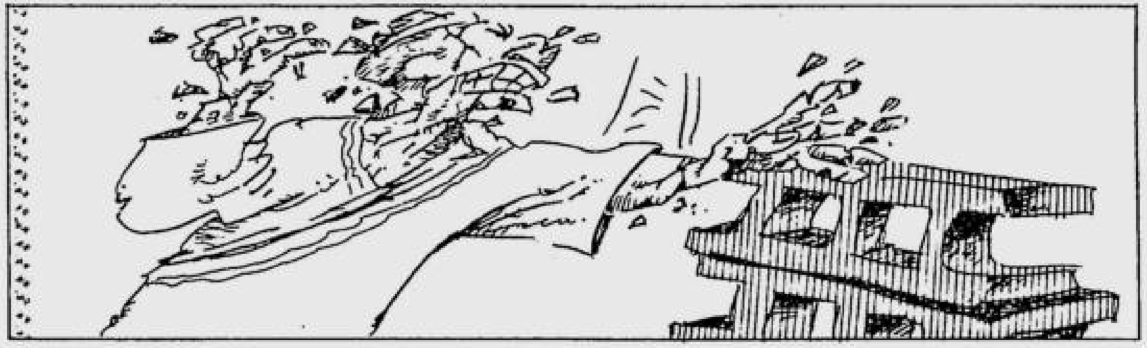
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAGKAROON AKO NG MASAMANG PANAGINIP. PATAY NA RAW ANG LAHAT SA NATURE..
....TAPOS MAG-ISA LANG AKONG TUMATAKBO, TAPOS, NADAPA PA AKO!
NAKU!
..PERO ANDUN KA AT TINULUNGAN MO KONG TUMAYO.
WOW, O DI OK DIN PALA..
HINDE NO! SA LAHAT NG MATI-TIRANG BUHAY, IKAW PA!

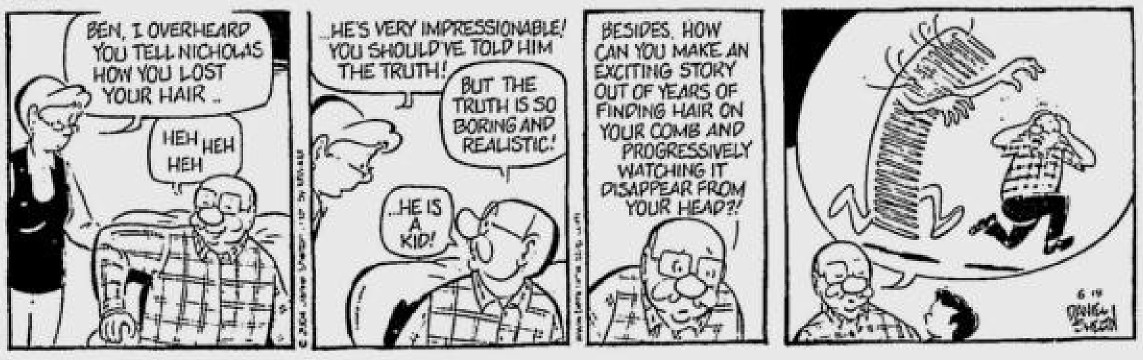
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

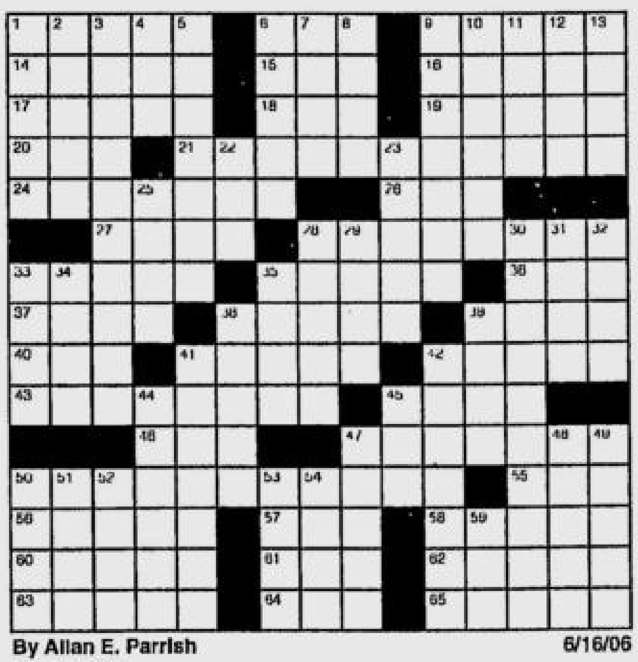


BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN, I OVERHEARD YOU TELL NICHOLAS HOW YOU LOST YOUR HAIR..
HEH HEH HEH
..HE'S VERY IMPRESSIONABLE! YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD HIM THE TRUTH!
BUT THE TRUTH IS SO BORING AND REALISTIC!
..HE IS A KID!
BESIDES, HOW CAN YOU MAKE AN EXCITING STORY OUT OF YEARS OF FINDING HAIR ON YOUR COMB AND PROGRESSIVELY WATCHING IT DISAPPEAR FROM YOUR HEAD?!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Allan E. Parrish
Mentor, OH

6/16/06

ACROSS
1 Bolivian capital
6 Lively dance
9 Certain 1980s Chrysler models
14 Oranjestad's island
15 One Gershwin
16 Brief summary
17 Against a thing, in law
18 In what manner
19 Part of UHF
20 Tear up
21 Alannah Myles hit
24 Shoulder muscle
26 Turkish title
27 Long, long time
28 Lunch holder, sometimes
33 __ Gras
35 With 41A, title for this puzzle
36 Victrola mfr.
37 Peruse
38 Wild card
39 Quantum theory pioneer
40 __ Lanka
41 See 35A
42 Cringe
43 Gave solace to
45 Cut like grass
46 Dernier __
47 Ms. Redgrave
50 Booker T. & the MG's hit
55 Einstein's birthplace
56 __ cum laude
57 Wrap up
58 Gold brick
60 Steer clear of
61 Invite
62 Former Pac. alliance
63 Kid of early TV
64 School grp.
65 Body's trunk

DOWN
1 Scottish landowner
2 Putter Palmer
3 Prince and the Revolution hit
4 Bart's grandpa
5 Ice smoother
6 Holy war
7 Camaro model
8 Stare stupidly
9 "A Nightmare on Elm Street" villain Freddy
10 Stock of wines
11 Last of "Hamlet"
12 Not common
13 Verbal skirmish
22 Fleur-de-__
23 Mist
25 "Sweeney __"
28 Jabbed
29 Pub servings
30 Rolling Stones hit
31 Liniment target
32 "Mr. Mom" co-star
33 Richie's mom, to Fonzie
34 Dynamic opening?
35 Scoop holder
38 Singer Iglesias
39 Boxer Riddick
41 Funnel cloud
42 Be composed
44 Picturesque
45 Irish Sea isle
47 Spirits of a screwdriver
48 Vegas openings?
49 Retort to "Are not!"
50 Auto financing co.
51 Sitarist Shankar
52 Swollen heads
53 Tide type
54 Part of RPI
59 "The Matrix" role

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

H	E	R	B	■	C	O	K	E	■	C	R	A	S	H
E	V	I	L	■	A	B	E	T	■	L	I	T	H	E
R	E	P	E	L	L	E	N	T	■	A	G	L	O	W
O	N	E	D	A	Y	Y	O	U	R	S	H	I	P	■
■	■	■	■	U	P	S	■	■	A	P	T	■	■	■
S	T	E	R	N	S	■	S	C	I	S	S	O	R	S
W	I	L	L	C	O	M	E	I	N	■	■	S	A	T
A	B	A	S	H	■	A	C	T	■	H	A	T	I	O
M	E	T	■	■	B	U	T	Y	O	U	W	I	L	L
P	R	E	T	Z	E	L	S	■	P	L	E	A	S	E
■	■	■	O	I	L	■	■	H	T	E	■	■	■	■
■	B	E	A	T	T	H	E	A	I	R	P	O	R	T
H	A	R	S	H	■	O	P	P	O	S	I	T	E	S
A	B	A	T	E	■	R	E	I	N	■	E	T	N	A
S	A	T	Y	R	■	N	E	D	S	■	D	O	O	R

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6/16/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You take a long view of things. You work for tomorrow. You're a patient, shrewd planner. Many of you enjoy supreme success late in your life because you understand the value of cultivating talent, people and situations. In this way, you invest in your own future. The year ahead presents interesting choices. You will know what to do.

Birthdate of: Joan Van Ark, actress; Joyce Carol Oates, writer; Phil A. Mickelson, golfer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Cool your heels and be reasonable today, because power struggles with practically everyone (especially siblings) are likely. (Zip thy lip.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today you're obsessed about one of your possessions or something having to do with how you earn your money. You want your way! (If you're old enough to read this column, you're old enough to know you can't always get your own way.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Ego struggles with partners and close friends are likely. Each person thinks he knows what's best for the other. Don't try to improve somebody. (And you don't have to let others improve you.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): It might be tough dealing with somebody in the government today. Your efforts to work with the government or large institutions are met with strong resistance! (Yikes.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Don't be pushy with friends today, even if you think you have great ideas that could help them. Similarly, don't let others run roughshod over you, either

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Definitely avoid power struggles with bosses, parents, teachers and all authority figures, including the police. It won't be a pretty picture. Just sit this one out. (Just for today.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): People are so enthused about their own beliefs that they want others to agree with them today. But people are not alike: Some prefer bread, some prefer rice, and some prefer potatoes.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Don't let others discourage you from your efforts to improve yourself in some way today. You want to be a better person. What better aspiration can one have than this?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Disagreements with partners and friends are likely today. But it takes two to make a fight. (You know this.) Therefore, cool your jets. Be patient with others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You have big ideas about how to make improvements or introduce reform at work. Unfortunately, others won't listen to you, especially your boss. Lighten up.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Parents must be gentle with children. Harsh astrological aspects make people very pushy and intolerant today. This is no way to treat young, tender minds.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Be patient with parents and family members today. Avoid arguments. Don't take the bait. Don't start anything. Stay calm.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

		5			7	3		
6	4				2		1	8
7								9
8	9							
				4				
							2	3
4								2
2	7		3				4	1
		3	2			6		

Difficulty Level ★★★★

6/16

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	6	5	7	3	2	4	8	1
3	1	4	9	8	5	2	7	6
7	8	2	1	6	4	3	9	5
5	4	8	2	7	1	6	3	9
6	7	1	3	5	9	8	2	4
2	3	9	8	4	6	1	5	7
4	2	7	5	1	8	9	6	3
1	9	3	6	2	7	5	4	8
8	5	6	4	9	3	7	1	2

Difficulty Level ★★★

Makeup madness

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

YES, EVERYBODY HAS experienced a makeup boo-boo. So before writing this article, I called some of my friends and asked them what theirs were. I actually enjoyed reading their stories and just had to add mine, just for laughs.

A long time ago when Euphoria was still open, I put false eyelashes from Ever Bilena (they came with glue), and I was so proud of myself. I was talking to this cute guy and he kept touching his eyes. Finally, midway through our conversation, he couldn't help it and he told me my eyelashes were falling off. No wonder he kept touching his eyes! **—Mandy de la Rama-Santos, exporter**

In high school, the lip liner became the "in" thing to use. So after school my friends and I would line our lips and put lip gloss on top. I thought it was the coolest thing ever. Looking back, we all looked liked fish.**—Kelly Misa, model**

My first encounter with makeup was in grade school. My sister had a concealer called Erase, which was in bullet lipstick form. I must have put a bit too much, because when my sister saw me, she couldn't help laughing at my deadly pale lips! I never touched her concealer again.**—Marie Calica, Marie Claire beauty editor**

When I was 15 years old, I put some eyeliner and walked to my boyfriend's house. I went straight to the living room where all my friends were hanging out. To my surprise, a girl I was not particularly fond of was there. I was so annoyed, but I felt confident and felt pretty because of my lined eyes. After a few minutes, I had to use the restroom. To my surprise the eyeliner had run. Happy Halloween to me! I got so pissed at my boyfriend for not even telling me.**—Chesca Garcia, actress/TV host**

When I was younger, I used to play with my mom's makeup behind her back. Once, I tried to put on her really red lipstick and red blush right before going to a party. I thought I could easily remove it with just a swipe, but I was wrong! I kept wiping off the makeup with tissue but it wouldn't come off. To make thing worse, I not only got a scolding from my mom for messing up her makeup, I also looked like a party clown with streaks of red stains all over my face!**—Mia Fausto-Cruz, Seventeen editor in chief**

As for me, I was so excited to attend the Ateneo freshman dance. It was the first time I was allowed to go out at night with my friends. We all met up at a friend's house to get ready. I remember my outfit—a sleeveless top, sarong skirt from Sari-Sari and Kashieca shoes. To finish off my look, I borrowed makeup from my friend, and I put on everything. Days after, we got the pictures from the dance and, to my surprise, my face was so much whiter then my neck! I had a frightening "floating face"! I tore all my pictures and wanted to cry.

Makeup is something that helps enhance our beauty, if used correctly. Truth is, I used to tell my friends Patty and Marielle, who didn't like to have makeup on even for formal events, that makeup is a friend. I know it sounds funny, but it's true.

Our first horrible experience would actually help us know what not to do the next time. And, yes, practice makes perfect.

The best makeup is the natural kind. This normally requires blush, lip tint and an eyelash curler, and takes five minutes or even less. If you are not a first-timer and you are spending more time on it, you are probably putting on more than you actually should, so beware.

I asked Jigs Mayuga, L'Oreal Paris' makeup artist, to get four girls to do makeup on. The girls come from different professions. My goal is to show how much makeup one should use at work without looking too boring.

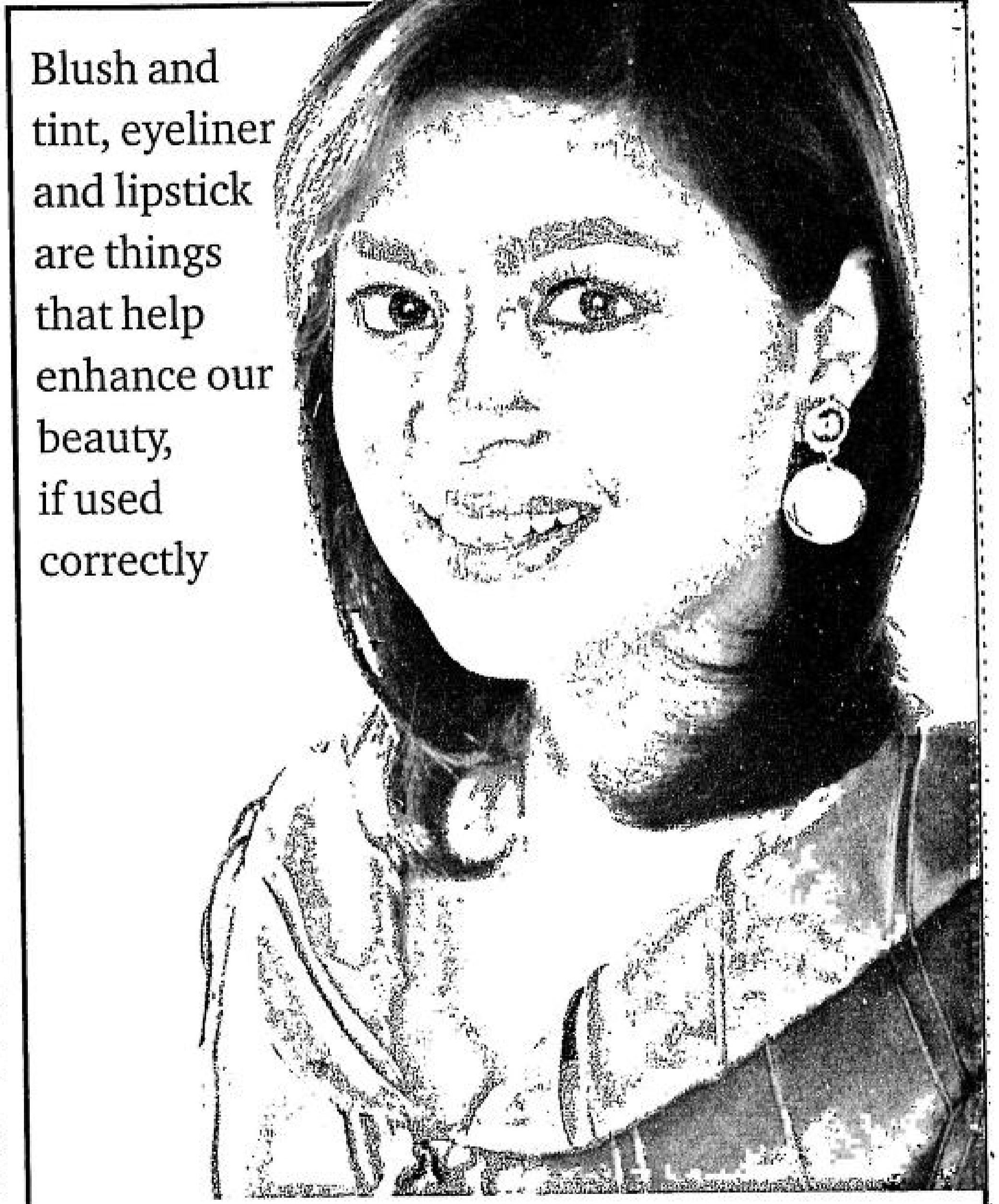
After mastering the "natural do," we should all graduate and be more adventurous with our makeup application. For me, adding eyeliner was the first step up, then came colored eyeshadow and so on.

I stopped using fake eyelashes since they didn't fit me. For some of my friends, they turned out to be a good thing though.

Makeup is something personal. What fits one person may not suit you, and vice versa. When adding something new to your normal routine, it is good to ask a trusted friend if what has been added is obvious, or if you do look better with it.

E-mail the author at rbeauty@inquirer.com.ph

Blush and tint, eyeliner and lipstick are things that help enhance our beauty, if used correctly



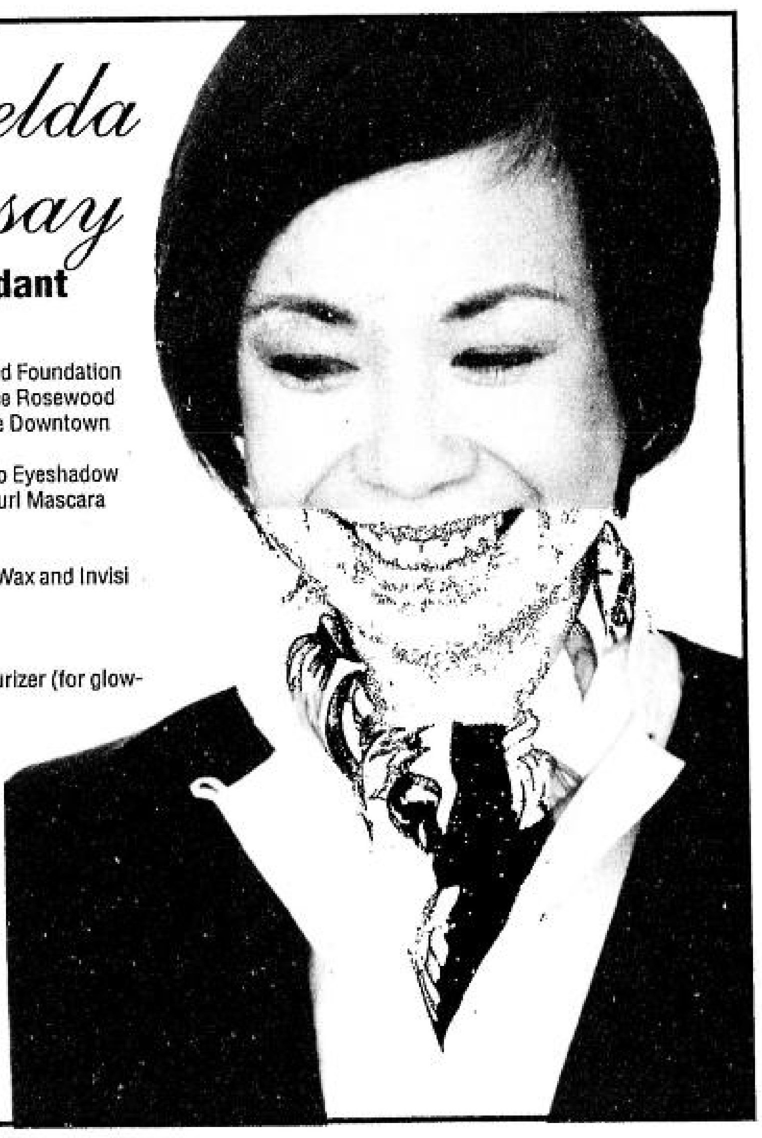
Cheri Mercado **- news anchor**

Makeup used:
- Face: True Match Liquid Foundation Nude Amber, Blush Delice Rosy Cheeks
- Lips: Color Riche Forest Flame Beige Crème,
- Eyes: Color Appeal Trio Eyeshadow Beige Taupe, Double Extension Mascara Black, Superliner Liquid Eyeliner Black, Brow Stylist Eyebrow Pencil Dark Brown

For hair:
- Feria Copper Shimmer, Studio Line Volume Max Mousse

Skin care:
- White Perfect Eye (with SPF15 and illuminates the eyes)
- Visible Results Moisturizer (for glowing skin)

Imelda Tinsay
- flight attendant



Makeup used:
- Face: True Match Liquid Foundation Nude Beige, Blush Delice Rosewood
- Lips: Glam Shine Juice Downtown Juice
- Eyes: Color Appeal Trio Eyeshadow Blue Nuit, Panoramic Curl Mascara Black

For hair:
- Studio Line Architect Wax and Invisi Spray

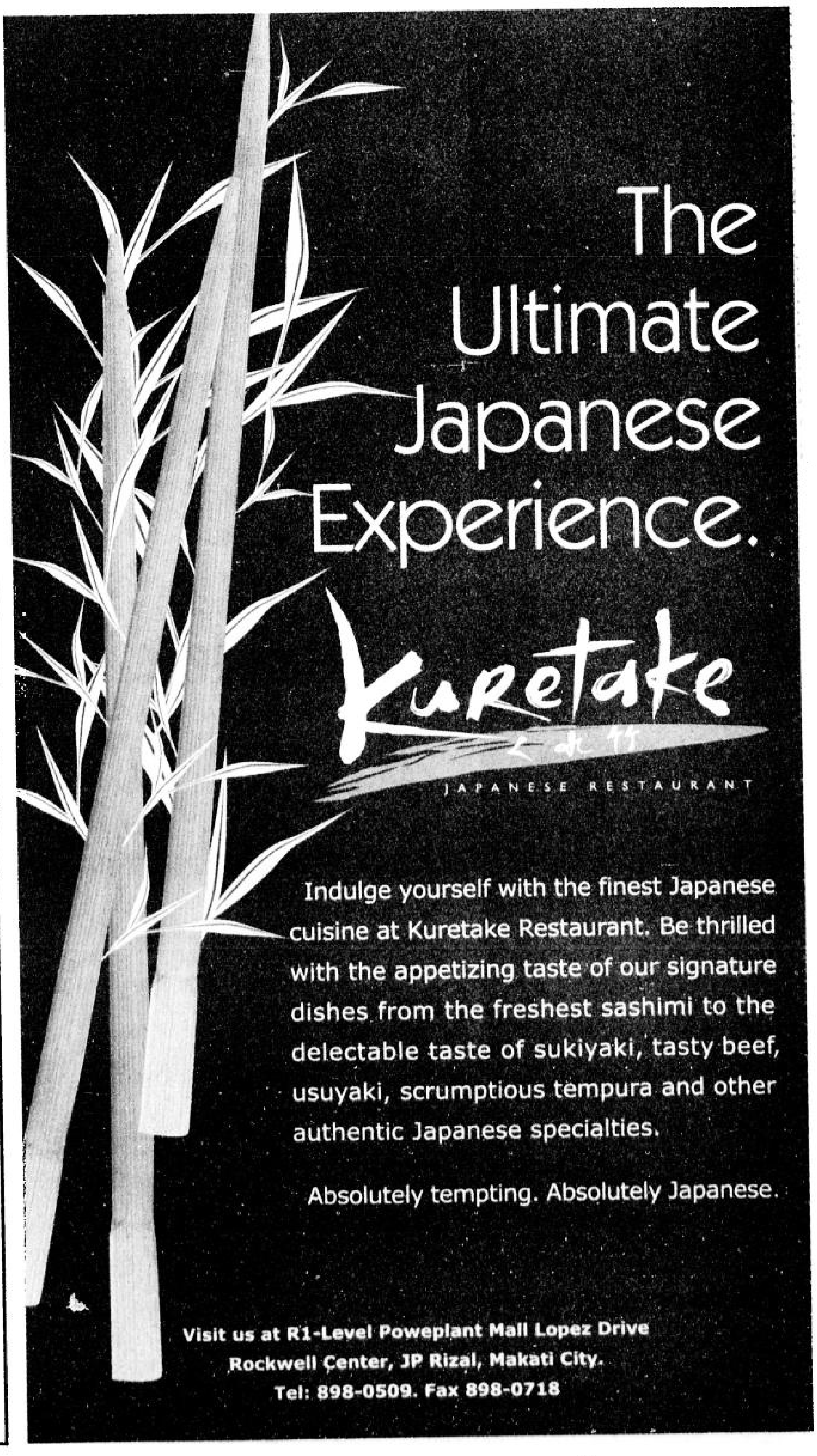
Skin care:
- Hydrafresh Eye
- Visible Results Moisturizer (for glowing skin)

Trisha Bermudez
- interior designer

Makeup used:
- Face: Sheer Cashmere Natural Beige, Blush Delice Fresh Papaya
- Lips: Glam Shine Cream Glam Red
- Eyes: Color Appeal Mono Eyeshadow Bronze, Double Extension Mascara Black, Contour Resist Eyeliner Black, Brow Stylist Eyebrow Pencil Dark Brown

For hair:
- Feria Black Spirit
- Studio Line Hot Straight

Skin care:
- White Perfect Eye
- UV Perfect SPF50 (with high SPF protection for when she goes on field)



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Filipinas lag behind Asian women in skincare

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

OVER LUNCH THE other day, we got a bit of information that may not necessarily be new, but is so interesting nonetheless.

Did you know that many Filipino women still use bar soap, if not detergent, on their face, and that compared to other Asian women, we are the least meticulous about skin care? This, despite the onslaught of skin-care products, the marketing blitzes of various brands, and the giant strides in skin care technology in recent years.

Apparently, a significant percentage of women, especially in the provinces, have yet to outgrow the habit, if not the age-old "tradition," of using one soap for face, body and hair. Their skincare regimen begins with soap and ends with a sprinkle of loose baby powder.

In contrast, other Asian women—particularly the Japanese, the Thai and the Indonesians—have as many as seven steps in their beauty regimen, from cleansing to toning, moisturizing and so on.

"The Japanese, for instance, have a long heritage of skincare regimen, not only for the face but also for the entire body," said **Mutya Crisostomo**, the new brand manager of Pond's.

Surveys also showed that one out of three Filipino women who are facial care users use astringent. It seems their skincare regimen goes only as far as using astringent, which they dab on like a cleansing liquid, usually as often as thrice a day. And this is another oddity unique to the Pinay—she loves the stinging sensation of a strong astringent, which is bad for the skin, of course. It's like pouring alcohol on your face.

What makes the Philippines unique in Asia is that it is hooked on astringent. To the Filipina, it seems, astringent spells skincare. What many don't know is that the wrong astringent, a deep-cleansing agent, leaves you practically red-faced so that you can't go out.

"It also leaves long-term damage and makes you photosensitive," says Mutya.

Our relatively backward ways where skincare regimen is concerned can be due mainly, of course, not only to lack of skincare education, but also to low purchasing power. Most women in this country still don't have the means to afford skincare products. Or, as Pond's assistant brand manager **Orange Aberin** noted, "It could be a choice between that and food, or that and cell-phone load."

All this makes the Philippines a good challenge for skincare brands like Pond's. Its cold cream is already a household brand to generations of Filipinas. Now, it is working to redirect the Filipina's habit to the correct steps in skincare—from cleansing and toning to moisturizing and using leave-on cream.

It should be interesting to see how its whitening toner, which has the vitamin B3 needed to whiten the skin from within (not peeling it off incessantly), would make inroads in the market.

Missing Tinio

The National Artists Awards presentation at the Cultural Center of the Philippines last Friday night was quite stirring. It didn't drag even if video and live shows were done to honor the achievements of the National Artists: **Bencab**, **Ildefonso Santos**, **Ramon Valera**, **Ramon Obusan**, **Imao**, **Fernando Poe Jr.** and **Bienvenido Lumbera**.

What we found touching was the Valera portion, where terno-clad models paraded to the music of "La Vie en Rose," translated to Filipino by **Rolando Tinio**. That moment, we missed Rolando the National Artist and Rolando the friend.

The performance of a "Rama Hari" excerpt with music by **Ryan Cayabyab** and lyrics by Dr. Lumbera reminded us of this innovative ballet musical that may not be known to the future generations. We told CCP president Nes Jardin it wouldn't be a bad idea to release a CD of the haunting "Rama Hari" music. Interestingly, Nes managed Ballet Philippines when this eminent dance company staged "Rama Hari."

That night, we also learned that NCCA head **Ambeth Ocampo** was nearly summoned to the Senate to answer questions about the National Artists Awards. A not-so-subtle invite to grilling, no doubt. How odd.

Pitoy not hurt

Meanwhile, the other fashion design nominee for National Artist, **Pitoy Moreno**, will be in Washington at this time to stage a fashion show marking the centennial anniversary of Filipino migration to the US.

"Honestly, I don't feel bad," Pitoy told us about not having been chosen as National Artist for fashion design.

"Valera was a good designer," he added.

Not only that. There's ample time for Pitoy, who's ageless and tireless. His Washington DC show at Ritz Carlton will have 120 pieces to be modeled by beauty queens such as Miss International 2005 Precious Lara Quigaman and Bb. Pilipinas World 2004 Karla Bautista, among others.

For more than three decades now, Pitoy has been bringing his collections around the world, to as far as Iran. When Pitoy's name crops up again in the next selection of National Artists, the parameters will go beyond design and craft to identity-building abroad.

Meanwhile, **Tim Yap** was just in Paris to launch his limited-edition watch (Oh my, Tim, you've come a long way). He said, no less than Stefano Gabbana of the Dolce & Gabbana brand wore his watch during the launch. What can you say to that?

> We're hooked on astringent, and many still use detergent on their face

ASIA'S Fashion Czar Pitoy Moreno is slated to showcase his collection in Washington D.C on June 17.

Happy Father's Day!

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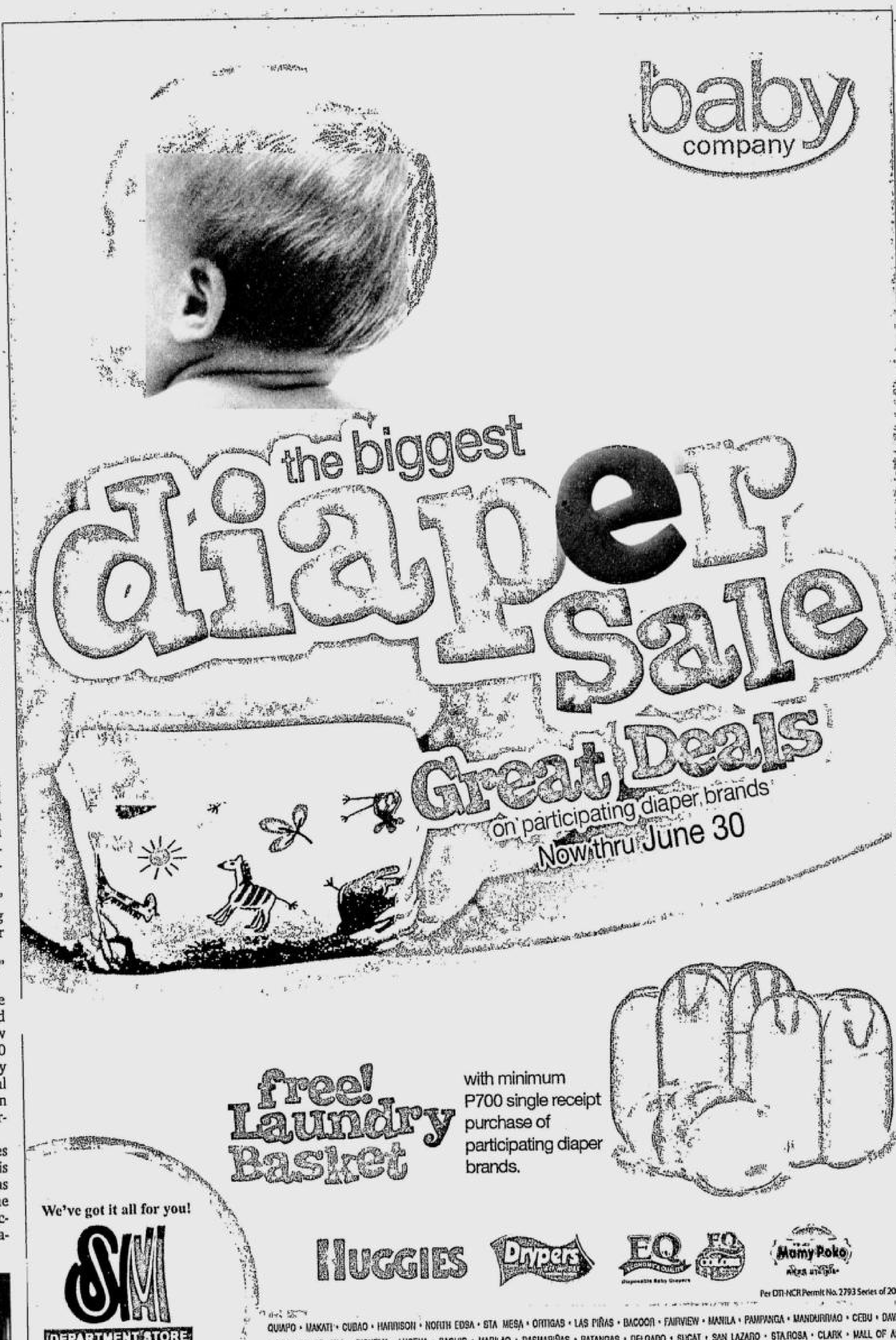
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GRAND OPENING MAY 21, 2006

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo leads the ribbon-snipping ceremony at the blessing of SM Mall of Asia. With her are SM founder and chair Henry Sy Sr. and wife Felicidad Sy, Rep. Consuelo Dy (leftmost) and Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales (rightmost), and Hans Sy, at the back of his mother.

HENRY Sy Sr. with Alfonso Sy, Sotero Lee, Sen. Alfredo Lim and Francis Chua

WARNER Bros.' Francis Soliven, United International Pictures general manager Selina de Venecia, Solar Entertainment's William Tieng, Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr. and SM's VP for leisure Ric Camaligan

Malls, jewelry, whitening and other wows

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission president Robert Aventajado and PSC's Steve Hontiveros at the opening of the Olympic-size ice skating rink

PASAY City Mayor Peewee Trinidad

PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer's chair of the board, Marixi Rufino Prieto

AUSTRALIAN Ambassador Tony Hely and wife Wendy Jeffrey

BRUNEI Airlines' passenger sales manager Manuel Rigor awards Gina Sunico the grand prize of a trip to Bali via Brunei Airlines.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

THERE WAS ADRENALINE RUSH when the absolutely awesome SM Mall of Asia threw wide open its doors to tens of thousands of shoppers, *palanggas.*

As soon as SM Prime Holdings' hotshot president **Hans T. Sy** and SM Inc. president **Teresita Sy-Coson** welcomed the first wave of customers, the crowd simply flowed into the shops. The others dined, watched the movies, or simply had fun checking the mall's top main attractions such as the fantastic panoramic view of Manila Bay, the country's first Imax theater (there are 10 other theaters) and an Olympic-size ice-skating rink.

There are over 600 local and international shops and over 150 indoor and al-fresco dining outlets.

Yes, *palanggas*, it's a major wow!

A day earlier, Manila Archbishop **Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales**, celebrated the Mass, followed by the ribbon-snipping ceremony with **President Macapagal Arroyo** as guest of honor.

The distinguished Sy clan was there, led by visionary taipan, SM founder and chair **Henry Sy Sr.**, and his adorable wife **Felicidad Sy.**

Other members of the Sy clan present were SM Investments vice chair **Henry Sy Jr.**, SM Supermarket SVP for marketing and SM Investments president **Harley Sy**, and SM Prime Holdings SVP for marketing **Elizabeth Sy.**

"Envisioned to be the premiere destination mall in the Asia-Pacific region, the more than 400,000 sq-m mall is located on a 19-ha property in the Bay Boulevard in Pasay City. It is SM Prime Holdings' 25th supermall, and the company's most ambitious project to date," explained **Millie Dizon** of SM.

The complex consists of four buildings linked by elevated walkways. The main mall includes shopping and dining establishments, the food court, and skating rink.

The South Parking Building houses SM Department Store and half of the 5,000 parking spaces; while the North Parking Building has the SM Hypermarket and more dining areas.

The north and south streets have been converted to landscaped pedestrian lanes. It has outdoor retail and dining tenants.

Without batting an eyelash, I must say that the SM Mall of Asia was definitely designed with us, the customers, in mind.

Check out this dynamic mega-structure, it's a one-of-a-kind in Asia, *palanggas.*

Miladay turns 40

For its dazzling 40th anniversary this year, Miladay launched "A Gift of Love," a precious little gift card, at The Podium in Ortigas Center, *palanggas.*

"Because it is our mom's dream for every Filipino to own a piece of Miladay no matter how small, we thought of introducing our newest product, 'A Gift of Love from Miladay,'" explained vivacious **Michelle Dayrit Soliven**, president of Miladay. "This gift card would surely put a smile on the faces of your loved ones."

Men who want to give their sweethearts the best gifts should try "A Gift of Love." It's a precious little gift, *palanggas.*

In true Dayrit tradition (the late **Mila** and **Vincent Dayrit** used to hold grand parties here and abroad), the launch was an awesome good time, *palanggas.* Hosting the event were the cool second generation of Dayrits: **Mark, Jaqui Boncan, Michelle Soliven, Christine** and **Yvonne Romualdez.**

"A Gift of Love" was successfully received by Miladay's regular clients and newfound friends like **Peter Kawsek; Mike Toledo; Nikki** and **Tina Jurado; Joey** and **Gina Sunico; Marissa Garcia; Tina Camus;** Pricesmart's **Jonathan Cayaon;** FDCP chair **Jackie Atienza; Sheila Lim; Roi Philips; Tessie Reyes; Nene Leonor; Gilda Salonga;** and Blims' **Carrie Lim.**

Also toasting the new Miladay line were **Philip Juico, Susan Yap Sulit,** Francorp's **Bing Limjoco,** Lazartique's **Andie Montenegro, Ginnie Lim Fernandez, Randy Cepeda, Penny Cham, Grace Gobing,** and other bling-bling lovers, dahlings.

They enjoyed the sumptuous cocktails prepared by popular **Buddy Trinidad** of Park Avenue Desserts. They drank red and white wines from Ralph's Wine, *natch.* Those with a sweet tooth drank Paradise Mango Rum Liquor.

When the Dayrits entertain, there is no half-way about it. It's all the way or nothing. In fact, fabulous prizes were raffled off, including a four-night stay in Nusa Dua Hotel in Bali, with a round-trip business-class air ticket from Royal Brunei.

Check out "A Gift of Love" at all Miladay branches: 150 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati; Glorietta 4, Makati; Waltermart, Pasong Tamo, Makati; Alabang Town Center; Robinsons Galleria; and SM Mall of Asia. Call 8964504 or 8964617.

Mary Kay's all-white affair

As I breezed in the grand ballroom of Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila in Ortigas Center, I saw that everything was totally white, *palanggas.* After all, it was the fantastic launch of Mary Kay's new brightening line, PureWhite System.

Shortly after being warmly welcomed by **Nancy Harel** of Nancy Harel and Associates Inc., we were pampered and beautified.

We met Mary Kay Phils. Inc. general manager, **Bernie Mercado,** marketing director **Reena Rodrigo,** and sales development and training director **Lynne Tribino.**

The long list of VIPs included stylish **Susan Freeman,** a special guest from Mary Kay's Dallas headquarters, who is also marketing manager for the Asia-Pacific region.

We were introduced to the new Lucentrix technology behind the PureWhite System. Mary Kay's PureWhite System effectively targets the source of skin discoloration and restores the skin's balance.

Great gifts were raffled off, including personalized charm bracelets. In addition, some early birds received fab gifts like limited-edition Mary Kay cell-phone charms with sparkling Swarovski crystal and special Mary Kay jewelry sets.

At the end of the all-white afternoon, the dazzling women were given exclusive samples of the PureWhite System, while the men received Mary Kay TimeWise 3-in-1 cleansing bars.

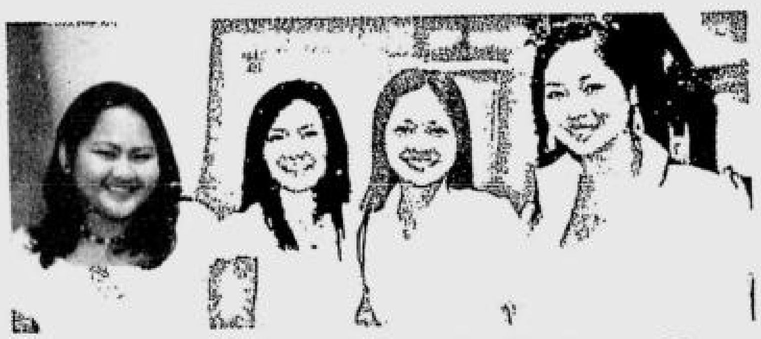
The grand prize in the raffle was a familiarization tour of the new Mary Kay facility in China, *palanggas.*

Hey, experience pure beauty. Exude pure perfection with PureWhite.

Call Mary Kay Phils. at 8596211 or visit www.marykay.com.ph

MARY KAY HOTSHOTS. MKP sales development and training director Lynne Tribino, MK general manager Bernie Mercado, Mary Kay Asia-Pacific Region marketing manager Susan Freeman and MKP marketing director Reena Rodrigo

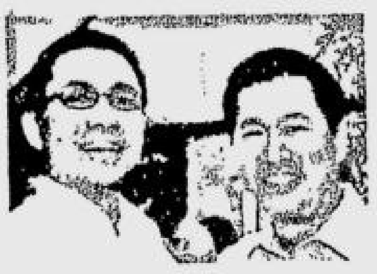
COSMOPOLITAN'S Ianne Evengelista, Nancy Harel and Mariel Chua



PR GIRLS Docker Cavestany, Bheng Loretizo, Aisa Gamo and Queen Dy Guani

MOI checks out precious charm bracelets with MKP sales development and training director Lynne Tribino.

LALI Suzara, CEB chair Christine Dayrit, Loi Concepcion, lawyer Albert Arcilla and Bum Tenorio



HOT young achievers. Businessman Benny Soliven and Peter Kawsek

HAPPY young couple. Tina and Nikki Jurado with their baby boy

EDWARD Lim

SHERRY Sy and Shiela Lim

THE LATE Mila and Vincent Dayrit's true gifts of love. The second-generation Dayrit jewelers: Jaqui D. Boncan, Christine Dayrit, only brother Mark Dayrit, Yvonne D. Romualdez and Michelle D. Soliven

JEWELRY is their thing. Leni Gutierrez, Ofie Soliven, Mila Querubin, Gilda Salonga and TV's popular host, Paolo Bediones

Dressing up Dad

Fatherhood statements

THINK OF THE SEASON'S FINEST FABRICS, silhouettes and colors which are tailor-made for fathers who insist upon quality both in life and in fashion and you'll think of Jack Nicklaus apparel which are exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporaiton.

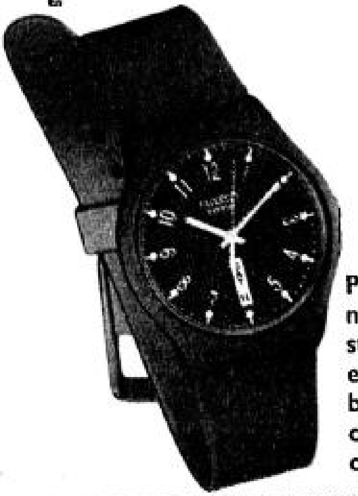
For doting father Freddie Tinga, youthful mayor of Taguig City, the Jack Nicklaus collection is solid proof fatherhood can be done in style.

A life of public service is wont to take its toll on family time, but for Tinga, it gives the unique opportunity to teach his kids by example.

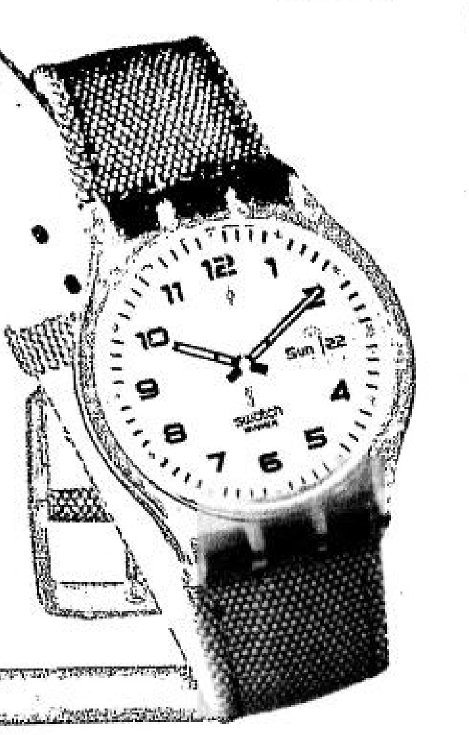
"I try to get them involved in some of my own activities," he shares. "They join me in my community events like weddings, graduation ceremonies, coronations and fiestas."

Through these activities, Mayor Tinga hopes his three children—Kylie, 11, Kerry, 8, and Kody, 3—will gain confidence in themselves and eventually learn to live a life of service for others.

Available at Rustan's Makati, Rustan's Tower, Rustan's Alabang, Rustan's Gateway, Rustan's Ermita and Rustan's Cebu, SM Makati, Mall of Asia and SM Clark.



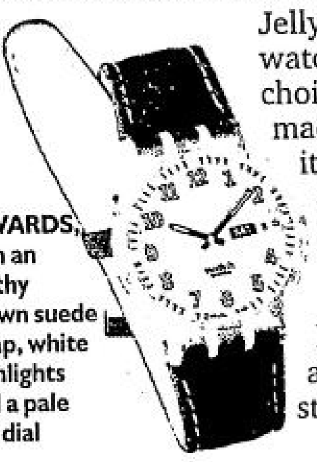
PORTLY, with deep navy-blue plastic strap and straight-edged loop, matte buckle and finely contoured matte case



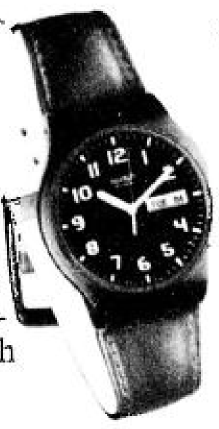
COMPLETION, Jelly in Jelly with moulded canvas strap—yes, the canvas of painters—camouflaged in a dark mossy green

For cool Pops

Jelly in Jelly Swatch watches are the hot choices. Swiss-made, of high quality and affordable at P2,950, the Jelly in Jelly Swatch has a larger face and a longer strap. Available at all Swatch stores and kiosks.



INWARDS, with an earthy brown suede strap, white highlights and a pale sky dial



REGISSEUR, all-black beauty, from the moulded leather strap to the plastic buckle

Memo to Dad

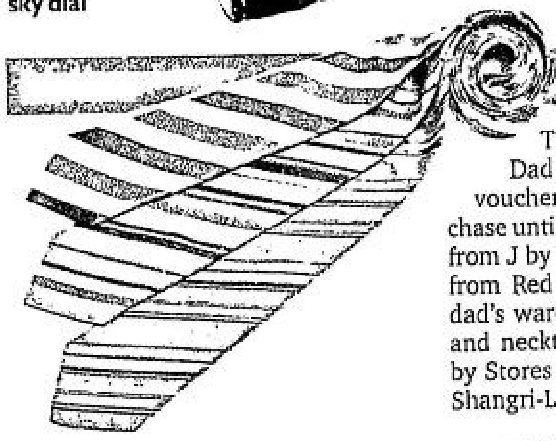
SUITABLE FOR MEN WHO ARE always on the go, like Joaqui Trillo and sons Luigi and Paolo, Memo's wear-it-work-it clothes can be dressed up or dressed down depending on a guy's work day and schedule.

For Alaska team assistant coach Luigi and younger brother Paolo, a sports commentator, the love of the game began with their dad who was a sports analyst. It's all in the family and all in the PBA.

"I look at my kids and I don't have any regrets at all. They're so cheerful, nice, friendly. They treat me like an older brother, and that's the way I want it," says Joaqui.

Memo is available in all leading malls nationwide.

ON LUIGI: Memo long-sleeved basic striped shirt with spread collar under a Memo fatigue casual blazer, Memo brown dress pants, Memo leather belt. **On Joaqui:** Memo dark-blue short-sleeved linen shirt with tab detail, Memo khaki dress pants. **On Paolo:** Memo brown short-sleeved striped shirt with welt-chest pocket, Memo black dress pants



The gift that gives

THE NICE THING ABOUT SHOPPING FOR Dad at Debenhams is that you get a P250 gift voucher for every P2,500 worth of menwear purchase until June 18. Debenhams offers tailored pieces from J by Jasper Conran and the more casual pieces from Red Herring and Maine. Add a little zing to dad's wardrobe with accessories like belts, cufflinks and neckties. Debenhams is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc. and is located at the 3/L, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Call 6329802.

Spring for this carry-all

AND HERE'S ANOTHER SPECIAL PROMO. Until June 30, for every purchase of two Springfield polo piques on a single receipt, you can buy an SPF bag for only P299. The SPF bag stuffs wallet, keys, cards, iPod, camera and more into either the spacious main compartment or an ultra-convenient zippered pocket. Springfield is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc., and is located at Greenbelt 3, Power Plant Mall, SM Megamall, Robinsons Place Manila, Alabang Town Center, Rustan's Makati and Ayala Center Cebu.

Row, row, row the boat

FOR THESE MEMBERS OF THE Metrobank Card Drago Pilipinas Rowing Team, there's nothing more fun than sharing the thrill of the sport with their children. And for Father's Day, they open up about the happiness of fatherhood.

"Family life is a lot like dragon-boat rowing," businessman and fitness practitioner Aries Fonacier explains. "In this kind of sport, there is no star player—the whole team moves as one machine. Just like with the life, you can't point to any single member as the reason why a family is strong because there is concentrated effort from everyone to make the family work."

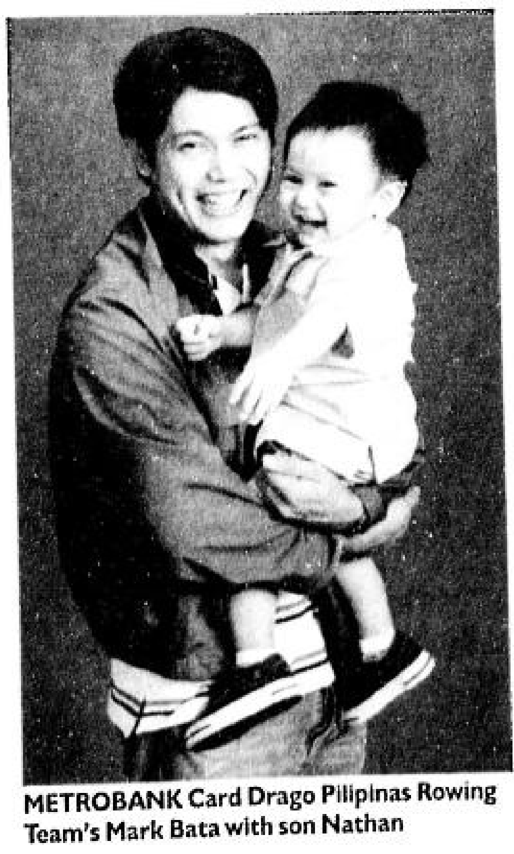
Fonacier is blessed with three children: Dave, 18, Gabrielle, 8, and Isabelle, 6. Soccer, rock-climbing and movie-watching form his kind of quality time with the kids.

Businessman Noel dela Merced and his 3-year-old son Noey are a tandem. "Noey is my mini-me," shares Noel. "We're each other's buddies. That's what we call each other: 'Buddy.' Even when he watches 'The Lion King,' Noey would say, 'Daddy, you're Mufasa and I'm Simba!'"

"My son was a surprise in my life," garments manufacturer Mark Bata shares. He has a dream for himself and his son: "When I went to Hong Kong in 1995, I saw a father-and-son team working together in dragon-boat racing. I thought then, 'Why not?' I'm looking forward to that moment. The question is, will I still be fit when I'm 50?"

Celebrate moments with Dad on his special day with confidence by using Metrobank Visa. With its worldwide acceptance benefit, it is the perfect companion that makes family moments even more magical.

ROWER dad Noel dela Merced with his "buddy" Noey



METROBANK Card Drago Pilipinas Rowing Team's Mark Bata with son Nathan

ROWER dad Aries Fonacier with his very own little league, his kids: Dave, Gabrielle and Isabelle

How to bag him

IT USED TO BE THAT MEN DIDN'T NEED bags to carry all their little everyday things. But times have changed and so have men's purses. Jack Spade, who is married to bag diva Kate Spade, has come out with messenger bags, briefcases, utility bags, wallets, travel bags and related accessories like billfold and travel wallets, money cases made of bridle leather and iPod cases.

Check out the red- and tank-colored book packs, and the aptly named Dad field bag that come in chocolate and tank with orange padded changing mats.

Jack Spade is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc., and is located at Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center.

SHISEIDO MEN

Macho must-haves

IF YOU WANT TO BREEZE through your shopping for a Father's Day gift, hie off to Gateway Mall.

At Rustan's Gateway Mall, choose from a quartet of skin care products from Clarins for Men and a trio of shaving creams and after-shave moisturizers from Mario Badescu. From Shisheido comes another set of moisturizing products to enhance dad's debonair good looks.

Over at Marks & Spencer, trendy and comfy shirts in cool colors are sure to suit every dad's preference.

Inspecting gadgets for Dad

GADGET GIVERS MUST CHECK OUT THE LINE OF Apple portables (iBook, PowerBook or MacBook Pro) or the iPod line (available in varying models and capacities) available at Microwarehouse Inc., the leading distributor of networking, mobile and digital lifestyle devices.

For tech-savvy fathers, there are also many handheld options from HP and Palm. If Dad is adequately stocked digitally, consider giving any of Mobile 1's travel kits, portable adapters, silicon or neoprene cases.

Microwarehouse has branches in Pasig City, Metro Cebu and Davao. Call 6370474.

LION dancers from the Philippine Lion Dance Association of Binondo, Manila, perform during the Chinese New Year celebration at Salcedo Community Market last January. The lion dances will be part of the anniversary celebration of the Salcedo Community Market tomorrow.

Makati markets mark second year

GOINGS ON

TOMORROW, JUNE 17, THE SALCEDO community Market at Jaime Velasquez Park, Tordesillas and Leviste (formerly Alfaro) Streets in Salcedo Village, will celebrate two years of community service and successful entrepreneurship. The market—which has been drawing shoppers from as far away as Antipolo, Novaliches and Alabang—will open 7 a.m.-9 a.m. with a marching band and a traditional lion dance from Chinatown to herald another year of good fortune. The Celso Espejo Rondalla—a mainstay of many events at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, will perform from 10-1 p.m., and the Makati High School Angklung and Choir will close the event at 4 p.m. Special discounts on all items await shoppers. Also included in the one-day event is an art fair organized by the Museum Foundation of the Philippines, It will include paintings, photographs and prints from galleries such as Boston Gallery, Drawing Room, Liongoren Art Gallery, Galeria de las Islas and the SilverLens Gallery.

The art fair, called "Art in the Park," will feature other participating artists from the Ilustrador ng Kabataan, Kasibulan and fine arts majors of the University of Santo Tomas College of Fine Arts. It will also mark the general assembly meeting of all Museum Foundation members. The market is being managed and supervised by Barangay Captain Lichauco with the cooperation and support of the Makati Comercial Estates Association, Inc.

TRADE EXHIBIT. The Gateway Mall in Araneta Center, Cubao is hosting a provincial trade fair dubbed "Higanteng Bazaar Mula sa Rizal," until June 18. The event is part of Rizal's celebration of "Araw ng Lalawigan ng Rizal."

BOXING FAIR. McDonald's, Crush Philippines and Punch-Out Boxing Gym present "The Jab Fair" June 16-18, at Market! Market! and at Alabang Town Center, on June 23-25.

SANTACRUZAN. The Catholic Women's Club will present Santacruzan on June 21, 3 p.m., at NBC Tent in Taguig. The Mother and Child limited-edition plate will be launched on the same day. Call 8432869.

CONTEST. The Book Development Association of the Philippines announces the opening of Gintong Aklat Awards 2006. Contest is open to all publishers of books in English or Filipino, in any of the following categories: literature, social science, religion, the arts, natural science, trade books, children's books and Tagalog novels. Deadline of entries is on June 30. Entries must be submitted to the National Book Development Board Office, M. Regidor St., Area XI, University of the Philippines-Diliman. Winners will be presented at the Manila International Bookfair on Aug. 30, at the World Trade Center. Call 9293881 or 7479250 local 101.

SEMINAR. The Missionaries of Mary will conduct a one-day seminar on the theme "Mary our Mother," June 25, at the Mortfort Missionaries, 121 9th St., New Manila, QC. Call 2414586.

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ACTOR • FITNESS TRAINER • TRAFFIC AIDE • PILOTO • CHEF • SINGER • SONG
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• MINERO • SCIENTIST • PHARMACIST • BIOLOGIST • ENVIRONMENTALIST •
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DRIVER • POSTMAN • METRO AIDE • LANDSCAPER • GYMNAST • EDITOR •
ILLUSTRATOR • PROOFREADER • LIFEGUARD • WEAVER • SHOEMAKER •
REPAIRMAN • CARTOONIST • DETECTIVE • ORGANIST • NURSE • PIANIST •
STEVEDORE • UPHOLSTERER • VETERINARIAN • LABORER • VALET •
STOCKMAN • TAILOR • BARBERO • CHEMIST • DRAFTSMAN • PORTER •
SCRIPTWRITER • VENDOR • STUNTMAN • LIGHTMAN • ZOO KEEPER •
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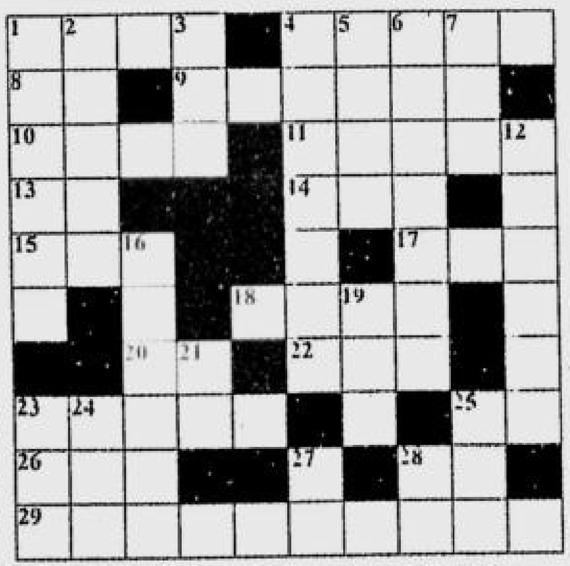
EDSA Tel. 705-1807 / 705-1809 West Avenue Tel. 413-6359 to 60 / 372-8845

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!



ACROSS
1. Ultimate buffet Resto
4. Co-founder of Rome
8. Alabama for short
9. _____Jefferson, USA Founding Father
10. Competes
11. Dad with Golden Touch
13. That is
14. Metal Bender Geller
15. Gene Carrier
17. Pouch
18. Cebu's Steamed Rice
20. Medical Dad
22. Signature (abbr.)
23. French Father
25. Conjunction
26. Mineral lode
28. MTV Host
29. George _____, USA Founding Father

DOWN
1. Retired Supreme Court Justice
2. UFO Passenger
3 Road Divisions
4. Rome co-founder
5. Middle East Chief
6. James _____, fourth President of the USA
7. Bush Country
12. Field Sport
16. Ama ng Katipunan
19. Military NCO
21. Musical Note
23. Prisoners of War (Abbr.)
24. Period
25. Spanish Eye
27. Article
28. Vermont for short

Complete the puzzle. Present to claim your FREE Stuffed Toy on FATHER'S DAY, Sunday, June 18, 2006!

BENCH Papaya Whitening and Firming Line

Grooming Dad

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

DADS WHO WANT TO have their summer tans fade faster can avail themselves of very affordable exfoliants that do the job. Note that your skin won't go lighter than your baby complexion, as these products only exfoliate.

I use Silka Papaya Body Wash (P37.75) and Whitening Lotion (P48.75) in the green variant (there is an orange variant). I prefer the body wash to the soap because it softens the skin more and the scent stays on much longer. Dads, of course, may prefer the soap.

Then there's Bench Organics Papaya Whitening and Firming Body Scrub (P179), Soap (P49), and lotion (P85)—all very affordable. I am impressed by the quality of these products, as a little goes a long way and they do work.

Godiva's Whitening Bath Soap and Whitening Licorice Body Lotion cost more than the brand's papaya counterparts, but show lighter skin results in as early as seven days. I have been using the brand's body lotion for years, and it has become the most requested *pasalubong* by relatives abroad.

Some readers loved the face whitening products from Mary Kay, Obagi Nuderm and Skinlogics I recommended last time, but some others were asking for items they could get via the grocery or drugstore, especially for dads in a rush.

Well, Nivea Men Multi-White has this facial foam that, aside from washing off dirt and oil, also lightens skin color and discolorations, delays aging, smoothens skin and mattifies without over-drying. I tried it, and my skin was shine-free and velvety after, but the clean smell is too manly, so it's really meant for guys.

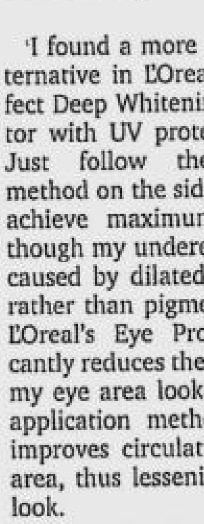
The 5-in-1 moisturizer with SPF20 is so matte that my pores seemed to disappear, and I did not become oily till many hours later. I didn't even need face powder, and my pictures looked so fresh-faced.

Thanks to the metrosexual revolution, men are more concerned about their appearance as well. Dark undereye circles now bother them, as these age the face a good five years at least. My failsafe products for these are Cernor Eye Cream and Biorica Antiage Eye and Lip Contour, but since these products are expensive, many men are hesitant to buy

Dads who want to have their summer tans fade faster can avail themselves of very affordable exfoliants that do the job

'I found a more reasonable alternative in L'Oreal's White Perfect Deep Whitening Eye Protector with UV protection (P645). Just follow the application method on the side of the box to achieve maximum results. Although my undereye darkness is caused by dilated blood vessels rather than pigmentation, using L'Oreal's Eye Protector significantly reduces the black rings, so my eye area looks brighter. The application method supposedly improves circulation in the eye area, thus lessening the bruised look.

Cernor Eye Cream is available at Jeunesse (tel. 6888062) or at any Belo clinic (8443939). Obagi NuDerm is also available at Belo or any Forever Flawless branch. Biorica Eye and Lip Serum has a new improved formula that is 50 percent more effective than the first version. Exclusively available at Essenses.



ANTI-AGE eye contour